

MORE SPY STORIES

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The author, the popularity of whose books on espionage has been phenomenal, has here gathered together another fine collection of spy stories of varied interest. The chief story, Mona Lisa's Last Smile, is the first full account of Operation Bernhard, a vast Nazi conspiracy by Himmler to ruin Britain's economy by means of fake currency. The scheme, which very nearly succeeded, involved Lisa Berger, a talented pianist, and of all the stories uncovered by the author none is more bizarre than that of Lovely Lisa, whose smile few couldathom.

The remaining fascinating stories add up to yet another superb spy book from one of the world's leading authorities on the subject.

By the same author

THE WORLD'S GREATEST WOMEN SPIES

WOMEN SPIES

GENTLEMEN SPIES

THE MEN IN THE TROJAN HORSE

SPIES AND TRAITORS OF WORLD WAR II

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WHITE BOOK OF THE CHURCH OF NORWAY

NIEMÖLLER—SOLDIER OF GOD

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COMPULSORY STERILIZATION

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SPIES AND TRAITORS

THE WORLD'S GREATEST

THE CHARLES LAUGHTON

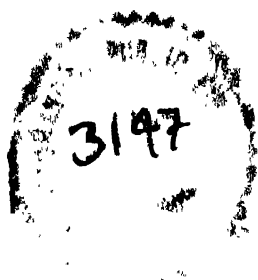
MORE SPY STORIES

Kurt Singer

**MORE SPY
STORIES**

INCLUDING

“Mona Lisa’s Last Smile”



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To my beloved wife
JANE
and the memories at the Nile

INTRODUCTION

I once heard a professor of literature talk about the psychology of authors. He claimed that writers were frequently unstable, self-centred and fickle. They believed that the creation of a book was as important an event as the birth of a child and never hesitated to say so.

I happened to disagree violently with the good professor. I have written some twenty-five books in my lifetime and I'm still what I like to think, a young man. I certainly don't believe I have twenty-five cloth-bound children. Actually, some of the books I have written I've almost totally forgotten. Of some I'm very proud, and of some I'm even slightly ashamed. Let's call these the "bars sinister" on my literary escutcheon. But regardless of the professor, I have always tried to be a story-teller and to tell my story honestly, with human interest, as well as I know how. And always I have enjoyed the immense advantage of writing about men and women in whose lives drama was inherent.

I hesitated a long time before writing the story of Lisa Berger and the Nazis' great operation in international forgery. I was in possession of all the facts, but I could not tell everything. There are rules, regulations, clearances and the need to protect Allied informers, sleuths, agents and military personnel. Many of these men and women who appear in this story were my friends or associates in the grim business of counter-intelligence. Most of the events and the characters are real. If they remind you of someone you know or have heard of, it is, as likely as not, no coincidence. I have had to disguise certain names and the locale of one or two incidents, but the story is true enough. I am more than content to let it speak for itself, but to inject a purely personal note let me say that of all the strange characters who have stepped into the pages of my books on international espionage, I have found

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none more fascinating than Lisa Berger, who, like Dr. Faustus, sold her soul to the Devil.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. U. E. Baughman, Chief of the Secret Service of the United States Treasury Department and his right hand man Harry E. Neal, Col. George J. McNally, and the *Reader's Digest*, for their valuable assistance. I am also grateful to those who have helped me with the tedious job of editing much of the original material on which this book is based.

KURT SINGER

I

Mona Lisa's Last Smile

ONE

IT began as Operation Bernhard and it ended when over a score of black coffins were hauled by truck into desolate Frankfurt one night when the wind gently stirred the dust of the ruined city. Two of the coffins enclosed the bodies of Lisa Berger and her husband, but the others were stuffed with millionsworth of counterfeit currency, most of it Bank of England forgeries.

Strictly speaking, that wasn't quite the way of it because to talk of a beginning and an end to Operation Bernhard suggests, perhaps, only the need for a post-mortem on the diabolic plan itself, and, of course, on the mortal remains of the Bergers whom it had destroyed.

The story of Operation Bernhard was not one which could be contained by invisible boundaries or simply by tracing a line from the day it started to the moment of Germany's utter defeat.

There were too many complications and too much debris left lying around.

When the sea breaks its barriers or a cataract rushes down a mountain side so that only the tops of the submerged houses and the bobbing corpses of men and animals can be seen, it is a disaster which is never really overcome. Old contours disappear never to be seen again, and the stricken area never quite manages to raise its head. Operation Bernhard was just as destructive. The Nazis had planned it to undermine the economy of Britain and since it had been conceived on a gigantic scale it had effected enormous damage. To begin with it had a time lapse which aided the forgers at work in a concentration camp and so clever was the counterfeiting that the money, which was passed through the

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banks of neutral countries, completely deceived the experts who examined it. The war didn't end the threat of Operation Bernhard even though many of its operators had perished.

Among them, of course, was Lisa Berger whom a few grains of strychnine had liberated from the wreckage of her life—a life which once had been vibrant and triumphant. In the concert halls of Europe she was acknowledged as a gifted pianist and a sensitive interpreter of the classical romantics; in the salons of the fashionable she had sufficient charm and good looks to hold her own among beautiful women. Now all that was over and done with. The crowds who had once acclaimed her had melted away and with them the men by whom she had been desired. Lisa no longer smiled her enigmatic smile for death had given her a mask yet more inscrutable.

It is strange how the past persistently overtakes those who try hard to forget it and, as I remember it, I was stripped to the waist and wiping away the grease and powder from my face in my dressing room after compèring a television programme when Ralph Peterson, an old crony of mine, knocked on the door and stepped inside before I could invite him, Ralph was a Government agent who knew where to look for information. He must have guessed from the glance I gave him what I was thinking. I had come to Florida to get away from war and the spy game and to try my luck in the television scramble. I was doing quite nicely in this new line of country, but that didn't deter Ralph or fracture his intentions.

"I've got news for you," he said, blandly ignoring the dismay my face must have telegraphed.

"Look, Ralph," I answered, "I'm in television now and trying to make a name for myself. I've finished with the old business."

"It hasn't finished with you, though," he came back. "We've just received a teletype message in the office which mentions you and a dame."

"A dame! Who is she?"

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He kept me waiting because he was an old hand at the game. Then, quite casually, he said: "I think you knew her in Europe. Her name's Lisa Berger."

I knew her right enough and told Ralph that thousands of other people did too. She was an international artist.

"Yeah, I heard she could tickle the ivories some."

"Well?" I asked.

"The dame's committed suicide along with her husband. The only thing I know about the case is that I have orders to bring you to New York on the midnight plane."

"Hold on, Ralph," I replied with some annoyance, "nobody can order me about any more. In any case, you must be crazy to imagine I can leave my work here at a moment's notice. Sorry, it just can't be done."

Ralph shrugged his shoulders and lit a cigarette. "The trip to New York is just the beginning of it," he explained. "You're wanted there before leaving for Germany to identify the dame and her husband."

"Get my old boss on long distance and tell him I can do all the identifying he needs if he just sends me a photograph of Lisa Berger. I never met her husband."

I could have gone on naming plenty of reasons, all valid and cogent, to show that the suicides of a couple of Nazis was somebody's business but not mine when Ralph handed me the teletype message to read. It was not the curt notice of death that seemed the key to the message. It was a couple of words, added, it seemed, as if by an afterthought, that got me wondering. I looked at them and re-read them and they began to buzz around like a couple of angry bees.

"Queer loot," that was how the message wound up. Just a couple of words, but they reminded me, disturbingly, of the war years and all I wanted to forget. Somehow it seemed like reading a proclamation and I knew why it was that my old boss wanted to see me. I ought not to have kicked to begin with, because without his help neither my wife nor I would have

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found our way to freedom. The Nazis wanted us and almost got us but for the helping hand we received.

Ralph gave me a quizzical smile, knowing that I was going along with him. I did a lot of explaining to my sponsors, fixed up a deputy and then said "Good-bye" to my wife and children. As the plane climbed steadily I looked down at the twinkling lights of Biscayne Bay and wondered how long it would be before I again saw them.

We checked in at the Statler Hotel in New York and I had not long to wait before my old boss was shown up to my room. He wasn't one to waste time in preliminaries and he reminded me that five years ago I had tipped him off concerning Lisa Berger's connections with the top-ranking Nazis and about the secret work in which she was engaged. He told me that his counter-intelligence at SHAEF headquarters at Frankfurt was bogged down with a problem that needed my help.

"What do you think has happened there?" he asked, and before I could ask he went on: "They've come up with twenty-two coffins, a couple of corpses, and loads of British currency. The bodies are those of Lisa Berger and her banker husband, Kurt, but we can't tell yet if the currency is genuine or not. Altogether there's about £21,000,000 worth of British banknotes and that figure doesn't include another £100,000 nestling against the cadavers."

"Why not leave the affair for the experts to wrestle with?" I suggested.

"No," he said and meant it. "I want you out there. Go and see for yourself. Everybody seems to think that the money is *beute pfunde*. If it is genuine British currency that the Nazis secured at some time we shall have to decide what is to be done with it. I have my ideas about it and maybe you, too, see it differently."

"How about the Bergers?" I asked.

"The bodies and part of the money were found in a peasant's cottage near the Enns River in Austria. The Bergers were both in possession of Swiss passports which were genuine enough. Maybe

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they could have talked their way out of capture, but they didn't. They turned in their chips."

As I listened to instructions I was thinking of how true to pattern the Nazis measured up to each other in life and death. They ground the face of humanity underneath their heels and when freedom burst its chains at last, they couldn't destroy themselves quickly enough. It had to be done in a Wagnerian way to cover up their cowardice, in "technicolor" wherever possible. The women were just as evil as the men. Lisa Berger, an artist to her tapering finger-tips, had occupied a ringside seat throughout the Nazi hey-day. It was only when the show was over that she became fearful and anxious for death.

"What was she really like?" they asked me.

"Somebody to be remembered," I replied. "She was tall, dark and imperious. Life glowed in her and she realized the power her talents gave her. She played beautifully and at the end of each concert she would face the audience and the plaudits calmly, with just a half smile brushing her lips, a Mona Lisa smile—just that, nothing more."

TWO

On the flight to Frankfurt in a giant D-C 6 I tried to get some sleep but couldn't. I kept visualizing mentally the dark, brooding face of Lisa Berger. There was magic in those wonderful hands of hers and as she played it seemed to flow down the graceful white arms like a hidden stream.

I remembered the first time I saw her. It must have been somewhere about 1920, when she appeared at the Carnegie Hall as a child prodigy. Her father was Swiss, a well-to-do vintner, and she had been educated in Zürich and trained at several conservatoires before an impresario heard her and brought her to America as a child wonder.

It was easy for her afterwards, and the next time I saw her she was already a mature artist whose personality had made her

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attractive to men. There were many whispers about her private life and the number of lovers she was supposed to have taken. Her parents had left her comfortably off and she had married Kurt Berger, an Austrian of good family and inclined to be autocratic. They had a son and it appeared to be a happy marriage although the story got around that it was hardly based on mutual faithfulness.

Anyhow, when the war came I was in Sweden and Lisa was busy with a series of concerts in Malmo, Gothenburg, Stockholm, Bergen, Oslo and Helsinki so it was not surprising that, since I was supplying information to British and American intelligence sources, her name should crop up. She was, I was informed, working for the German Secret Service and it was her practice to donate quite a lot of money to various peace organizations. This desire to promote pacifism wasn't impressively cunning, but it was supposed to help keep armaments down against Germany. Lisa may have imagined, too, that it gave her clearance against suspicion, but it didn't as I found out when the boss came to see me at my apartment at Enskede in Stockholm. He had been tipped off that a Russian agent named Prokov was wise to Lisa's activities and intended seeing her in Helsinki, where she was to give a concert. The boss wanted someone at the keyhole, so to speak, when this meeting took place and he had arranged for me to go there with three Swedish aides from Minnesota!

I met Arvid, Einar and Ivar on the small ship on which we crossed to Finland. My friends stuffed themselves with *smorgasbord* and discussed drink and delicacies without appearing to notice how pale I would become before having to disappear! When we booked in at Helsinki's biggest hotel Arvid and I, supposedly a couple of Swedish business men, shared the same room. Einar and Ivar occupied another not far away and passed themselves off as salesmen. Thanks to Arvid our room was next to the adjoining suite occupied by Lisa and we were able to get to work shortly after our arrival.

Einar discovered that Lisa and her maid were out and he

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was able to get into the apartment without much difficulty. He fixed a small microphone under a table in the sitting room, where a piano had been installed, fastened the connecting wire to the telephone cord and then ran the end through a neat little hole he bored in the party wall to our room. There wasn't a trace of his work to be seen as he locked the door and returned to our room, where he completed the job that would enable us to pick up the vital interview between Lisa and Prokov on a tape-recording machine, a German one, which we had brought with us.

We were prepared for a long wait. Prokov, we knew, was staying at the hotel and had a room on the next floor. He could choose his own time. My companions had pointed him out to me in the hotel foyer on our arrival and they knew much more about him, and how he operated, than I did.

I can't remember how long it was before Lisa returned with her maid, but it was evident that she had been shopping in Helsinki and as soon as we heard her come in Einar started up the recording machine. Quite soon Lisa went to her bedroom, probably to change, for her voice drifted away, but a little later she began to practise and that certainly relieved our boredom. She had begun to play a Beethoven sonata when we heard the untuned note of the apartment bell intrude. The caller must have pushed past the maid as soon as the door was opened, and walked into the sitting room, for suddenly the piano playing ceased. Arvid signalled with his lips that it must be Prokov and then we heard Lisa say sharply: "You have no right to disturb me in this way. I don't give interviews to the Press except in my dressing room at the concert hall."

Her voice seemed more distant than it was, much more so than that of her visitor whom we heard say: "Save your anger for those who deserve it. I am Konstantin Prokov of the Soviet Control Commission and I want to see your passport."

Shrilly, Lisa answered: "Finland is not yet a Russian province and I'm not a prisoner here but a German citizen. I have come to play at a concert in Helsinki as everybody knows."

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We heard Prokov say that it was the task of his department to investigate every visitor without exception. Suavely he added: "Especially a lady such as yourself. You've been decorated by Hitler and it is known that you were an intimate friend of Goering's late wife."

Lisa, for all her anger, didn't sound too certain of herself and there was silence while she called to her maid and told her to bring the passport which was in her handbag in the bedroom. Prokov evidently flicked through the pages quickly for we heard him say next: "It's of Swiss issue and you've used it quite a lot—America, Britain, Italy, Spain, Turkey and other countries. A very useful aid in wartime. I thought you said you were German?"

Lisa had evidently decided to play her hand without losing her temper and she replied quietly: "My husband is a citizen of the Greater Reich, but I am Swiss-born and have retained my citizenship."

The explanation didn't cut much ice with Prokov for he rapped back; "You are suspected of having contacts with certain individuals known to be enemies of my country."

"Nonsense," was Lisa's cool rejoinder.

Arvid signalled me with a smile of satisfaction and then Prokov began to speak once more in a low rumble, like an angry bear.

"We have known for a long time of your association with a certain Major Cornelius," he said. "He is on the Finnish General Staff and has tried to buy arms in Europe and America. Both of you stayed at the Hotel Bedford in Paris a month after the war broke out. No doubt he intends to see you before you leave Helsinki."

It was easy to understand that Lisa had not expected this, for in a breathless kind of way she began to explain that Cornelius was one of her oldest friends whom she had known before her marriage. "I don't know much about his activities, but I am certain that he is not a Nazi."

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"Did you ever introduce him to Himmler?" asked Prokov evenly.

"Himmler came to my concerts because he admired my playing and for no other reason."

We heard Prokov chuckle and then he must have grabbed hold of Lisa for she gasped and was then quiet. So too was Prokov, and for a moment I wondered if he hadn't rumbled our recording machine. We missed what he said to Lisa but suddenly she began to speak again. "I'll tell you the truth," she said. "Major Cornelius has arranged to visit me here tonight after the concert. It is purely out of friendship, you understand."

Prokov grunted. "That remains to be seen," he said. "We know your lover or confederate carries with him a big wad of foreign banknotes which he has secured by exchanging counterfeit British currency supplied to him by the Nazis. He is going to hand over the money to someone in this hotel before calling on you. We're interested in the identity of this person. It may be the Swedish business man in the next room or two other prospects, a Finnish count occupying room 258, or a German lower down the corridor."

Lisa protested that she knew absolutely nothing about Cornelius' activities, but Prokov cut her short. "We can whisk you into Russia," he said, "and nobody will be any the wiser. You will be well advised to co-operate with us."

Lisa replied, almost in a whisper: "What do you want me to do?"

"When your friend, who has sold himself to the Nazis, and gets a commission for peddling forged money, arrives at the hotel he will dispose of the cash to a person on this floor before he comes to see you. It is up to you to find out which room he visits and then telephone me from your apartment to the reception desk, where I shall be waiting."

Lisa murmured something that didn't come over clearly but we never missed a word of Prokov's. "How we deal with the situation is none of your business," he said brusquely. "If you want to

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leave Helsinki safely you won't play any tricks. We'll be watching you every moment."

Lisa wanted Prokov to go so that she could get ready for the concert. It was already dusk, but Prokov wasn't buying that one.

"You can forget about Cornelius until the time comes," he said warningly. "I'll take you to the concert hall in a car I have waiting outside the hotel."

By the time Lisa and the Russian walked out of the apartment together Ivar had slipped down to the foyer. He saw them drive away in a limousine accompanied by a couple of Prokov's hatchet men.

Arvid looked at me now that there was silence in Lisa's apartment and said finally: "This forgery business is serious. We have known for some time that the Nazis have been counterfeiting Russian currency, pact or no pact, but it's news to me that they have been producing British banknotes. It wouldn't surprise me to learn they're forging dollars in the same way."

I nodded. It wasn't easy to fit Lisa into the picture at this stage because although she was a Nazi, whatever she might say to the contrary, she was well off and didn't have to earn money in the way it appeared that her friend, Major Cornelius, was doing. But, quite clearly, she must have known what he was up to and I am sure Prokov had not for a moment been taken in by her denials.

She was a cool and resourceful woman, though, and in the end she slipped a fast one across Prokov and saved Cornelius.

I don't know whether she was actuated by love or Nazi fervour, but as I recalled the events of that night in the cabin of a military plane slipping through the darkness a mile above the Atlantic breakers, it occurred to me that women love power in the same way that men do and will sell themselves just as willingly.

Arvid and I went to the concert that night and left Einar and Ivar behind to keep an eye on anything that might occur in the hotel during our absence. We saw Lisa, apparently untroubled, queen it at the piano, and at the end of the concert coolly acknowledge

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a tumultuous reception. The bouquets that were handed to her were gracefully taken, but accepted as a right, so it seemed. The packed audience included Finnish Government officials and prominent Nazis. Perhaps Cornelius was also present. It was likely enough, because when Arvid and I returned to the hotel Prokov appeared shortly afterwards, but without Lisa. He apparently did not want to be seen with her and had left his men to watch her. It was not long before she showed up and when she came into the foyer it was easy to see how strung up she was. As she took the lift Arvid and I hurried up the stairs. She had entered her apartment by the time we reached our room.

We heard her telephone ring as we switched our light on and edged the door open to get a view of the corridor. At that moment the lift buzzed up and a tall, good-looking man prepared to step out when Lisa, still in her mink coat, flew out of her apartment and ran towards him. It was then that Prokov, gun in hand, came up the stairs and fired quickly as Lisa pushed the man and herself into the lift and flung the gates to. The man was Major Cornelius. I could see the look of disgust on Prokov's face as the lift dived to safety. He must have sensed, as we all did, that there was really no third party. Major Cornelius had come to the hotel to see nobody but Lisa. She was the contact to whom he was supposed to hand over the money he had obtained by passing counterfeit.

The noise of the firing brought everybody out of their rooms, but Prokov slipped his gun back into his pocket and walked away before anybody could question him. At some time during the evening he had evidently changed his plans. He had followed Cornelius himself without waiting for the prearranged signal. Lisa wasn't to be caught out, though, and had guessed what he would do. She beat Prokov to the punch by hardly more than a second, but it just turned the scales and she managed to leave Finland without again running foul of Stalin's emissary. Cornelius skipped out too, but not with Lisa.

That was about all I had known of her. She wasn't in circulation

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any longer. Now her body had been taken out of a black coffin and lay on a slab in a morgue in Frankfurt, but there was a hiatus in her life which had to be accounted for—a going back over the war years—and this seemed to me to be a tall order in a country still smoking in ruins and from which rose the stench of the unburied dead.

THREE

The D-C 6 lowered itself on the relaid tarmac at Frankfurt airport round about breakfast time, and by then I had had enough of aeroplanes for some time to come. Waiting for me were a couple of staff officers, Captain Stillwater, a Texan from Lubbock, and Captain Richard Radford from Portland, Maine. The former was tough as all oilmen are. Radford told me that in civilian life he was a professor of forestry. We drove in an open staff car to the Hotel zum Goldenen Loewen, which was near to headquarters and where most of the American officials in Frankfurt stayed.

Neither of my companions wanted to speak about the *affaire Berger* at this stage. They waited for me until I had taken a bath and breakfasted and then took me to meet the director of counter-espionage in the sector. He can be identified as Mr. Little. It seemed that so far as the British banknotes were concerned their discovery was not regarded as strictly military or espionage business and would be dealt with in co-operation with the U.S. Treasury Department, through Major George J. McNally, a former special agent and top investigator of the American Secret Service.

"The Bergers have been identified by witnesses who knew them," explained Mr. Little. He suggested, though, that I should visit the mortuary and then brought the interview to an end with: "I think that will be about all for the present."

I didn't greatly appreciate his nonchalant manner and replied: "I am now a civilian, a citizen if you like, and if it was only for



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the purpose of looking at a couple of bodies that I was hauled out here I could well have been spared the trip."

"Relax," he said. "You'll get much more work than you ever bargained for. There's plenty of us want to know about this precious pair and we know you can help us."

The ride through the city to the morgue was depressing and then the rain came down on the ruins and the shattered homes and that didn't make it any better. We pulled up outside a big grey-bricked building and the person in charge of it was waiting for us. When we got inside it looked as if half the dead in Frankfurt had been dumped there. I don't know how much disinfectant they had, but it wasn't enough to neutralize the dreadful smell from naked corpses. They lay everywhere in grotesque piles and the place was packed with men and women searching for relatives among the dead faces.

We were shown, at last, into a room that had some kind of deep-freeze system. Immediately a stretcher was pulled in front of us and an attendant lifted the sheet and I found myself looking at Lisa Berger.

She looked young in death with just a ghost of a smile on her pale lips. Her hands lay folded against her breast and I thought of how much fine music had come from those waxen fingers.

"You wish to see Herr Berger?" I was asked.

"No," I said. I didn't know him, only his wife.

The morgue was no place in which to linger, and we hurried out and stopped at the nearest *kneipe* for a schnapps. We all needed a drink.

Captain Radford asked: "It was Lisa, wasn't it?"

I nodded, trying to think of something to say.

Radford sipped his drink and then said: "It doesn't quite add up when you think of all the money they had. It looks as if they gave up the ghost without a struggle."

"Maybe it was the kind of money that would not get them far," I said.

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"But it's genuine enough, at least the experts say so," Stillwater chipped in.

"Do you mean the Bank of England?"

Stillwater said he would not go as far as that. "You've got an idea they are fakes?" he persisted.

But I didn't answer him. I felt irritable and tired. "Look, fellows," I said, "get me back to my quarters. I need another bath and plenty of sleep."

They left me a little later and I got into bed feeling warm and drowsy. I thought I would be able to drop off right away, but then I began to think of what I had let myself in for. I wasn't too happy about the way the case of the Bergers and the giant wads of currency was being handled. I wondered if anybody had really caught on to the fact that what had dropped right into the laps of the unsuspecting Americans in Frankfurt was evidence of the biggest currency swindle ever perpetrated. In a way I was off the beam, as I was to learn later, for I had reckoned without the shrewdness of Major McNally and some astute men from Scotland Yard and the Bank of England.

Next morning at the conference at headquarters I was introduced to an American general and other officials involved in the investigation. I don't think it is advisable to mention the general's name because as a brasshat he seemed to have more brass than brains. He evinced hardly a flicker of interest in the Bergers' connections with Himmler, as I soon found out when I told him of the Helsinki episode and the way Lisa had outsmarted Prokov. I was asked if I had ever made love to Lisa and if not why not. They weren't ribbing me either, but I curbed my anger and decided it was wisest to sit back and let the others do the talking. Sooner or later they would hand over the part they expected me to play.

At this stage it was hard to fasten on what had really happened, but from the desultory conversation I got a fragmentary account of the events that had brought together Major McNally, three senior officers from Scotland Yard and a Bank of England official.

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I had yet to meet them, but from what I could gather it was really McNally who had first set the ball rolling. He was quite an extraordinary character and had tried his hand at many jobs. He had been a seaman, radio operator and photographer and during the depression became a hair stylist in a fancy Fifth Avenue beauty parlour on the strength of his French accent! Later McNally tied in with the American Secret Service as an investigator and was subsequently assigned as communications officer, first to Roosevelt and then to Truman, at the wartime conferences between the Allied leaders.

McNally moved into Frankfurt in the wake of American troops and on the lookout for counterfeit money, but he soon became convinced that Germany had no longer the paper or plant to print bogus money. His job looked easy until the day an American security officer at Freysing, a town near Munich, telephoned to say that things were popping there and he had better come over. He didn't waste any time and arrived in Freysing to hear an incredible story. It appeared that a peasant had wheeled a handcart into headquarters loaded with foreign money which he was convinced was faked and wanted to be rid of. Nobody took him up, perhaps they were too busy, but he had come back the following day and refused to budge until the Americans relieved him of his burden. He was still there when McNally showed up.

McNally's eyes must have been bright with amazement as he glanced at the peasant's cart. It was stacked with bundles of British Treasury notes and much more besides; thousands of British stamps of small denomination; passports for Sweden, Yugoslavia, Mexico, Brazil; American birth certificates; military papers for Finnish, Italian and Austrian soldiers; citizenship documents from Arnhem and Utrecht and stationery bearing the imprint of the Swiss Red Cross and the American legations.

The peasant told McNally that most of the money and the documents had come from Austria. The stuff had been fished out of Lake Traun and the River Enns and there was plenty more

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to be recovered if anybody wanted to take the trouble. McNally realized that the passports and documents were phony, but he wasn't certain about the money even when he had examined specimens of it through a magnifying lens. In any case, he decided, everything pointed to a gigantic counterfeiting organization that might still have plenty of sting left even if Germany had rolled over and was out for the count.

When McNally, with a couple of U.S. Treasury experts, high-tailed it to the banks of the Enns in Austria they found the military authorities there, with the help of local people, had recovered British currency reputedly worth not less than £21,000,000. Not far away, and in the Alpine district of Redl Zipf, the bodies of Lisa Berger and her husband had been found in a peasant's cottage. There was a lot of currency there, too, and a brace of Swiss courier passports made out in the names of the dead couple. Most of the currency fished out of the river had been loaded into black coffins, which were apparently the only boxes available, and two more were requisitioned for the bodies, which McNally sent by convoy to Frankfurt.

It was hereabouts that my old boss in New York had received the teletype message about the affair and which resulted in my being whisked from a peaceful occupation in Florida and flown to Germany. In the meantime McNally had contacted the British authorities and shortly afterwards he received a London call from the Bank of England. Within twenty-four hours the bank had sent over as their representative a tall, slim official named Philip Reeves. His job was to examine the notes and he went from coffin to coffin, riffling through the bundles and even "tasting" some of the specimens. Occasionally he would put one under the microscope to search for the tiny abrasions from the hot rollers of the paper-making machines which could not be seen by the naked eye.

An analytical chemist can break down any printer's ink to its exact composition and, similarly, Reeves, with the aid of a spectograph, the like of which I had never previously seen, could

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tell if the metal in a plate was of the exact quality as used in the making of his country's currency. He could not, of course, check in this instance because the notes were not genuine.

"These are illicit banknotes," he finally said after a long and careful examination and then went on to explain that although the notes appeared identical to the naked eye, they had not come out exactly the same, and minute differences could be detected which proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that they were bogus. One had to know Bank of England notes as Reeves knew them to be able to detect the forgery and, undoubtedly, this fake currency was a brilliant imitation. Reeves looked at a bundle of them once more, tapped them with a long finger and said: "It would need the resources of a Government to turn out work like this."

He was dead right. For five years Britain had had to contend with an insidious attack against her economy by a counterfeiting organization that had cost the country millions of pounds. Bogus British banknotes had been traded in almost from the beginning of the war and had come from Zürich, Lisbon, Stockholm, Ankara and even from British Honduras. Major Cornelius, Lisa Berger's friend, must have been in on the ground floor when the scheme was launched. I had reported on his activities at the time, but it was not then possible to judge the extent of the fraud.

Here in Frankfurt, though, the full viciousness of this Nazi monetary blitz became plain. It was used not only to undermine Britain's financial integrity in exchange transactions, but also to equip spies landed in Britain early in the war. One of them, picked up in Edinburgh, carried a suitcase containing £3,000 of beautifully counterfeited notes. He was well aware that he had taken his life in his hands, but he was certainly surprised when it was explained to him that he had been sent over with fake money. Not a moment too soon the Bank of England switched her currency plates and this move certainly jolted the Nazis, but even then there was still a lot of counterfeit to deal with, for the Nazis had the advantage of a time lapse.

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FOUR

With the arrival in Frankfurt of Fred Chadburn, William Rudkin and Reginald Minter from Scotland Yard, we got down to the task which faced us. To begin with it was a top priority to round up all counterfeit money, but even of greater importance was the need to discover the plates and the printing presses and the personnel involved in the plot. Reeves was nobody's desk official and I came to admire his imagination and patience. We got a tip-off from a captured German officer that he had once been sent to the Redl Zipf area to collect counterfeit from an S.S. officer and Reeves suggested that our search ought to begin there. Ultimately we located, in one of the galleries of a 200-foot tunnel in a mountain side, presses and other machinery, but if paper had been stored there none now remained, nor did we come across a single plate.

The complete success of our investigation depended on the discovery of these plates. They had caused enough trouble already and in the wrong hands were still an effective weapon against Britain. The Enns River continued to spew up more catches of spurious banknotes, but it was hard to get a lead as to the men who had worked in the subterranean forging factory. We combed the villages over a wide radius trying to squeeze information out of tight-lipped peasants until at last we got a clue from one of them. It wasn't encouraging.

"The men from the factory were taken to the extermination camp at Ebensee a few days before the German surrender," said our informant. "You will be lucky if you find even one of them alive."

A few of us went to Ebensee, forty miles away. I don't know how many died there, but there were still great incinerators in this camp which had been a charnel house. It was now being held by American troops in whose custody were the professional butchers who had worked for the Gestapo. Among them was the camp commandant. He was duly produced, looking white and scared.

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He thought he was for it, and talked quickly and nervously. He told us that about 140 men from Redl Zipf were brought in by the S.S. for extermination. "I didn't carry out the orders," he said, "because I knew the war was lost and the Americans only a few miles away."

"What happened to them?" I asked.

"After the S.S. had gone I told the prisoners to beat it and they were only too pleased to get away."

The commandant showed us the files and records, and we could see they had been meticulously kept so that nobody who had died there could be completely forgotten. Extermination, it appeared, had to be a tidy affair. He had made an entry of the men who had miraculously escaped—names, home addresses and birth dates. The commandant knew something, too, of what had gone on inside the mountain at Redl Zipf. "They called it Operation Bernhard and it was a subject about which you had to keep your mouth closed. Towards the end they had begun to make fake dollars. Some of the prisoners among the last batch were found to be in possession of a number of them. The bills were destroyed before the S.S. left."

When we returned from Ebensee it was to learn of a fresh development. A second search had been made of the cottage where the Bergers had spent their last hours together and, thrust away in the back of a cupboard, a satchel was found containing the personal diaries of Liza. They predated her marriage, at least the earliest, and were full of intimate details of her life and career. The earliest of these records makes it abundantly clear why, although an artist, Lisa was flattered by the friendship of utterly ruthless men. She, too, loved power and public adulation, but towards the end she came to curse the name of Hitler and all those who walked in his footsteps for the war had cost her the life of her one and only beloved son. "My dearest son Bernhard is dead," read one entry. "He has perished with his friends in North Africa and Rommel has written to tell me that he gave his life for Hitler. Why? How I hate them! all who have robbed me thus and left me

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to mourn my dear one, my dearest son, whose face I shall never look upon again."

Later in this account I shall draw upon these diaries, because they are invaluable in showing how Operation Bernhard began and spread its wings across five continents. Lisa and her banker husband walked into this river of fraud up to their necks and, metaphorically, they were drowned in it. Lisa's story, told in entries written in a flowing hand, was to a certain extent, disappointingly incomplete. She was, of course, fully conversant with many of the details of this vast fraud—indeed, she and her husband were vital links in unloading the fake money on the unsuspecting—but the person who really possessed the keys to the mystery was a certain Major Kruger. If only we could have laid hands on him months of exasperating work would have been saved and we would have had much more to show for our efforts. But Kruger had disappeared and the battalion of counterfeiters were dispersed in Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and heaven knows where else.

Within four months we had picked up about fifty of the men whom we knew from the records we had taken away with us from Ebensee, had worked at Redl Zipf. The trail took our investigators into ruined cellars, black-market hide-outs and hostile villages whose dwellers spat at us and called us Allied swine. Our quarries were a collection of frightened, starved characters who had taken too much on the chin for far too long. It was hard to persuade them that we were not going to work them over in the way they had been accustomed to, and they couldn't be blamed for lying and trying to hold on to their secrets.

One of them, more candid than his scared companions, explained: "We belonged to the worst elements in the concentration camps and it was among our kind—kidnappers, thieves, forgers and bank robbers—that the Nazis recruited the men they knew were capable of counterfeiting foreign money. The choice was quite simple. Either we did as we were told or we were sterilized and sent to the Russian front knowing also that our

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families would be made to suffer. I can't say we needed much persuasion, and if anybody feels like condemning us let them try bargaining with the Gestapo."

Of all the men we interrogated we learned most from a Czech named Oskar Skala, who was working as a beer salesman in a village near Pilsen when we ran him down. He had been a book-keeper of sorts in Cell Block 19 at the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen, where at one time the counterfeiting had been done. Skala had retained a small notebook with a record of how many banknotes had been printed there each day and he had even noted how many were regarded as first grade, and safe for distribution, and also the averages of discards.

From other prisoners who had been employed on the scheme from its very start, Skala had heard that the Nazis actually began at the *Reichsdruckerei* in Berlin but had experienced difficulty with the old Prussian officials there. When the bombing of Berlin began the "factory" was moved to notorious Oranienburg, just outside the city and then transferred to Sachsenhausen. In the closing months of the war it had become almost impossible to find a site safe from the Allied air armadas, and, ultimately, the counterfeiting was done underground in the Alpine district of Redl Zipf.

Skala had not only heard of the mysterious Kruger but had actually met him and, with a rueful smile, he assured us that it had not required much intelligence to realize that this was the man behind Operation Bernhard. From what Skala was able to reveal, plus the evidence we plucked from the police file and, of course, all that Lisa Berger had written about him, an authentic portrait of Major Kruger began to take shape. The Nazis had named their scheme Operation Bernhard because it happened to be the birth name of Kruger himself who was in charge of it and answerable only to Himmler.

Kruger, apparently, had been born in circumstances similar to those in which so many Nazis were reared; a dull household in

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which money was tight and in whose midst it was natural to feel thwarted.

Friedrich Walter Bernhard Kruger was the son of a telegraphic inspector and first saw the light of day on November 26th, 1904, at Riesa, Elbe, in Saxony. Due to his father's meagre resources Kruger had to be satisfied with a brief education at Chemnitz. He was of medium height, dark and unusually swarthy, but in other respects he measured up to the Aryan yardstick. He was a sexual pervert with an especial liking for the company of young officers and, since he was a person of limited education, and fewer scruples, he was amply equipped to progress as a Party member.

Kruger's advance was rapid after his training in the S.A. and S.S., and he had a large slice of luck when some posters he had designed caught the fancy of the Party bosses and drew attention to his "talents." In 1934 he was promoted *Hauptschaftsfuhrer* and put in charge of the book burnings at Leipzig and the *auto-da-fé* of modern art in Munich. His sense of racial purity was outraged by the veneration many knowledgeable Germans had for the works of Rembrandt and in a truculent declaration, published in the Nazi newspapers, he pronounced that since the Dutch master had lived in the ghettos for the purpose of painting the patriarchal, he must unquestionably have been a Jew and that disqualified his work in Germany.

He was active in the crises provoked by Hitler in the Sudetenland and Austria and helped in the preparations for the invasion of Norway, Holland, Belgium and France. Kruger was known to have visited these countries before Hitler overran them and at the end of the war the French secret police began a search for him in connection with the theft of documents from the Soviet Embassy.

But Kruger was now no longer around and to this day his fate remains a matter for speculation only. He was a much wanted Nazi, but the search for him led nowhere. It is quite possible that he was held responsible for the events that finally overwhelmed the Bergers and was liquidated. The swastika was never intended

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to guarantee immunity whenever a scapegoat had to be named, and perhaps Kruger died in a cell where there were already many old bloodstains. As against this theory it should be remembered that following Germany's surrender many notorious criminals escaped the dragnet and managed to find a hole in which to crawl. It isn't remarkable that a merchant of death should regard his own life as sacrosanct, and no doubt Kruger valued his skin highly. Maybe he had read a little history and discovered that the fine edge of justice blunts quickly the moment the inheritors begin to quarrel over the estate of the deceased.

FIVE

Had Lisa Berger been a poor, struggling artist it might be pleaded in extenuation of her descent into crime that she had little choice. But that was hardly the case for she was already a name in the world of music and had no need to count her pennies. But there were flaws in her character which had made her always the servant of her ambitions. She was an extraordinarily gifted pianist, but not a truly great artist, and she must have realized that she had arrived at the boundary which separated her from the elect. Thus Lisa did not have to be converted to Naziism, she welcomed and embraced it as a career woman, regardless of its bloody and fearsome record.

This much is clear from her diaries, which took me many hours to read and understand. To bring Lisa into this story in an even more personal way than I have so far done, I considered allowing this account, from now onwards, to speak for itself by quoting her written testimony. There were, though, too many difficulties to overcome and not the least of them was that although Lisa was as much a part of Operation Bernhard as anybody, she was really only concerned with the finished product—the faked notes—and not their manufacture. The physical features of the swindle were, of course, known to her, but we had to look elsewhere for additional facts.

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Yet another aspect of Lisa's testimony is that the significance of certain events was sometimes lost on her, or rather that she did not always apprehend their true importance until much later. All this therefore conspired against introducing Lisa at first hand so to speak, much as I would have liked to have done so. Nevertheless, without her help it would not have been possible to lay bare the villainy of Operation Bernhard, the astonishing drama it engendered, or its climax—the desperate journey of an Italian freight convoy, loaded with fifteen hundred boxes of gold for the Nazis, which was chased across Italy to the Adriatic pursued by commandos, paratroopers and planes.

Lisa's maiden name was Bond and it seems that she first met Kurt Berger at Salzburg where she was giving a recital. In a whirlwind wooing, Berger loaded her with flowers, perfumes, furs and jewellery, and although this was no new experience for Lisa, it was certainly the first occasion in which she had been pursued by a suitor as wealthy and as socially prominent as Berger. She also imagined that Berger possessed exceptional integrity, which was understandable since he was then the chairman of two banks, and later as the President of the International Chamber of Commerce was a familiar figure at international monetary conferences.

Berger's father had been an Austrian diplomat and Kurt enjoyed an excellent education and connections which gave him many advantages. Following the death of his father, Kurt Berger, by then an excellent linguist, decided it would not do his prospects any harm to visit two of his aunts then living in Kansas. They had made a fortune out of wheat and oil and they were delighted to welcome their good-looking nephew. Berger confided to Lisa that one of them had fallen in love with him and to escape the entanglement he had returned to Austria. He was well remembered by these two women and when they died, within a couple of years of each other, he came in for most of the money they left.

From these confidences Lisa was left in no doubt as to Berger's

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wealth and influence and two months after their first meeting she accompanied him on a Mediterranean cruise. It was a luxury trip taking in Italy, Turkey, North Africa and Spain and before the lavish voyage was over Berger had proposed to Lisa and had been accepted.

"Few people could ever have been as greatly in love as we are," wrote Lisa, adding somewhat pensively: "I wonder if my marriage means the end of my music and my ambitions? Somehow it doesn't seem possible, yet one can never tell when one is in love."

Within a year of her marriage Lisa gave birth to a son. He was christened Bernhard, and soon he was given over to a nurse. Lisa, having persuaded her husband that marriage should not be permitted to stifle art, returned to the piano. Berger was proud of his talented wife and in the early years of their marriage accompanied her on her concert tours of Latin and North America, Australia and, of course, Europe. Had Lisa but known it they were the happiest years of her life—in achievement and in marital relationship.

Although the idyll became tarnished by time and infidelity, the Bergers seemed to retain their warm regard for each other. What betrayed them was their individual weaknesses and ambitions and neither was less culpable than the other. When the shadow of the swastika eclipsed freedom in Europe Lisa could not resist becoming an exemplar of Nazi *kultur*, while her husband, shocked as he was by Hitler's annexation of Austria, cherished his investments in German industry too greatly to offer any defiance.

The Bergers became entangled in Operation Bernhard almost from its inception. Reinhard Heydrich* actually put up the idea to Himmler who, at the beginning of the war, was experiencing difficulty in financing foreign operators. Every department concerned in these activities was short of foreign currency, particularly British money, and it was Heydrich's plan to set up an organization which would not only satisfy Himmler's requirements but would be on a scale sufficiently massive to rock the

* Killed by Czech patriots after becoming Protector of Czechoslovakia.

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credit of Germany's opponents. The plan was mentioned to Hitler and was not too well received, and when Chief of Intelligence Canaris heard of it he said that such forgery was unworthy of the German nation. Himmler, however, was not to be dissuaded, and in the initial stages of the scheme he decided that the Bergers were the ideal couple to help him unload the counterfeit.

So they duly received an invitation to dine with the Gestapo chief and one night, early in January 1940, a bullet-proof staff car called for them at their home in the residential district between Zehlendorf and Schmargendorf and sped them to Himmler's villa in Berlin. The place was ringed by storm-troopers and the Bergers walked between an escort to meet their host. The only other guest was Heydrich. An observant chronicler and an informative diarist, Lisa recalls her impression of both men. She noticed a striking similarity even though Heydrich was the taller and heavier man. "They were blond and seemed to possess identical characteristics and they peered at Kurt and I out of small sharp eyes. When they spoke it was as if they were giving orders on a barrack square. I felt uncomfortable and embarrassed at dinner. It was obvious where they had come from by the manner in which they gobbled their food—*proleten* without a doubt."

Discussion of the scheme was left until later in the evening and Heydrich, anxious, so it seemed, to monopolize the conversation, told of his troubles with more than one police chief corrupted by too much power. Himmler nodded and said there were always difficulties to be faced. In his department there were many whose work was unsatisfactory and it didn't follow that because a man was a loyal Party member, with a good record, he necessarily made an able administrator. "I have too much paper work to do and, really, I am an outdoor man," he complained.

Then Himmler asked: "Do you know that I once worked as a chauffeur?" It was obviously a sly and calculated dig at the exalted social standing of his guests, but Lisa promptly registered the astonishment she was expected to display, for she replied: "If

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a chauffeur can become chief of the Gestapo then there can be nothing wrong with Germany."

"You are not a National Socialist, Herr Berger?" inquired Himmler, turning to her husband.

Berger answered: "*Meine Herren*, not everyone is a born fighter, but that does not mean to say I am not patriotic. I believe myself to be a good German, and am willing to serve my country in the capacity that is best suited to me. If I were to join the Party now it could only be as a late arrival, and I should not be respected for it."

Himmler must have agreed and explained that for the project he had in mind it was probably just as well that Berger was not known as a prominent Nazi. The plan began to unfold, and Kurt Berger found himself answering one question after another, as if he were in the witness box and under cross-examination.

"Have you banking contacts in Switzerland?"

"Yes, of course."

"If called upon to open foreign accounts in neutral countries do you anticipate any difficulty?"

"Not if I secure permission from the Government, which you must know is necessary."

"Would it be possible for you to arrange foreign accounts in enemy countries?"

"It can be done, Herr Himmler, through my own banks."

"Are you prepared to take your wife with you on special missions, say to Switzerland, Italy, in fact, anywhere?"

Kurt Berger must have turned to Lisa for an answer. "For a moment I felt terrified," she reveals in her diaries. "Himmler and Heydrich were waiting and I could sense their power and ruthlessness. I knew they could destroy us at any time they desired. It was an awful thought and I tried to forget it and answered: 'I am willing to go anywhere with my husband. It would not be difficult for me because I am Swiss and well known as a pianist. But Kurt is a citizen of the Greater Reich and that, surely, would restrict his movements.'"

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Himmler, brushing away the objection, said: "There will be no difficulty regarding passports. We can do everything necessary to ensure easy and uninterrupted travel."

Having satisfied himself that the Bergers were to be trusted as the principal distributors of forged currency Himmler explained that already considerable quantities had been produced, and that the purpose of the scheme was to effect the economic ruin of Britain, whatever military disaster awaited her. Lisa and her husband were then told that a certain Major Bernhard Kruger had been placed in charge of operations. They would be meeting him very shortly and would, no doubt, come to admire his perspicacity and find him easy to work with.

Before the dinner party finally broke up Lisa had extracted a promise from Himmler that her seventeen-year-old son, now in uniform, would not be forgotten as a future officer. The Gestapo chief jotted down the details of the boy's regiment and number and as the Bergers prepared to leave he congratulated them on accepting his proposals.

"I am delighted that you have decided to help us," he almost shouted. "You will be doing a great service to your country and it will call for loyalty and courage. Here, take my hand in the assurance that I will do everything possible to help and protect you. Heil Hitler!"

The Bergers, too, acknowledged allegiance to the Führer, but they were silent during the drive back to their home. Both of them realized they had been committed to an enterprise the end of which could not be foreseen, records Lisa.

It seemed that the Bergers had hardly fallen asleep when they were awakened by the telephone bell ringing. Kurt answered it and a voice asked if it would be convenient for Major Kruger to visit them some time during the afternoon. An appointment was arranged and Lisa comments that she took a dislike to their visitor from the very first moment. She was accustomed to being treated with deference and Kruger handled the situation brusquely and with scant courtesy. He hoped they understood

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he said, that he was in sole charge of Operation Bernhard and was therefore responsible for making whatever decisions were necessary.

Lisa was quick to sense the menace in Major Kruger. It wasn't so much his cool insolence, and the manner in which he talked down to people, as Lisa's certainty that he would trample them underfoot should anything go wrong with the scheme. He explained that the printing plant had now been set up at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and that he himself had hand-picked the guards from units of Himmler's Death's Head Brigade. They could, he asserted, be relied upon to keep their mouths closed regarding their special duties.

If Lisa viewed the storm-trooper with misgiving Kurt Berger remained untroubled by any doubts. He was accustomed to trading on the weaknesses of others, and whenever he met a forceful character, such as he recognized the major to be, he was not at all dismayed. He questioned his visitor concerning the men employed on the enterprise and was told there was no shortage of craftsmanship.

"We have an expert staff of engravers and printers," boasted Major Kruger, adding with a wry smile: "Those who were not immediately available have been recruited."

Berger knew enough of Nazi methods to realize that after the prisons and detention camps had been combed Kruger must have ordered the arrest of workers he considered indispensable to the plot, but this did not change the opinion he had formed of his visitor. Kurt Berger was a banker and not a jurist, but he understood the law of the jungle better than most people.

Major Kruger did not prolong his visit, but before he left it had been arranged that he would call again early next morning to take Berger to Sachsenhausen so that Kurt could see what was being done there and examine the forgeries that later he would have to dispose of. The invitation was not extended to Lisa and, in any case, she was not anxious to go. Kruger had frightened her and the following is an entry she made on the day her husband left to visit the concentration camp:

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"The more my mind dwells on this scheme the more keenly I feel its danger. If we are caught in Switzerland or elsewhere changing counterfeit money it will mean utter disgrace and ruin and perhaps a long prison sentence. Kurt, I feel, is too optimistic. He believes that it will help him add to his already considerable fortune and he is entirely without fear. I realize it is impossible to persuade him to change his mind and even if he agreed to our seeking asylum elsewhere they might try to kidnap or kill us. And there is Bernhard, my dear son, to be considered. I dread to think what might happen to him if ever we fled from Germany. I have felt terribly uneasy ever since Major Kruger's visit. He must have seen that I did not much care for him. It is my fervent hope that Himmler, whom I feel sure cherishes a high regard for Kurt and I, will protect us from Major Kruger if ever it becomes necessary."

The writing on the wall could hardly have been discernible to Lisa—it was much too early—but her fears were well founded as she was to discover, for there were times when only Himmler stood between the Bergers and final disaster.

SIX

Although Sachsenhausen is only a few hours' travel from Berlin, Berger found the journey along fast *autobahnen* very trying. The roads were crowded with military vehicles of every description and they had to crawl along. They had breakfast and lunch at wayside restaurants and Berger was able to study his companion much more closely than at their first meeting. He discovered that although Kruger was as tough and ruthless as he had early imagined, he was susceptible to flattery and appeared amenable as long as he imagined he was giving orders which would be obeyed.

They reached Sachsenhausen late in the afternoon and Kruger immediately led the way to Cell Block 19. Before looking at the engraving section Berger was shown a number of small printing

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presses which were being worked. They were obviously new and Kruger, pointing to them with pride, said: "Nothing but the best for us. We had them built to our own specifications, and although it meant holding up the production of war material in the factory in which they were assembled we got what we asked for. It would have been ridiculous to have allowed anything to stand in our way."

Berger was impressed by everything he saw, and it was with an expert eye that he looked over the store rooms stacked with parcels of water-marked paper—cunning duplicates of the kind used by the Bank of England. The paper had been manufactured by a famous mill, but only after many tests and a great deal of experimenting.

The entire process of forgery was rolled back for Berger's inspection and it was reassuring to him to notice how each finished banknote was transferred to a group of examiners for microscopic probing and grading. He was to be given only the perfect counterfeits and he could see that these were selected so meticulously that the task of passing them would involve little risk. Examining the specimens minutely he marvelled at the superb skill which had produced them.

Each banknote was passed through several hands and ultimately reached what was called the "ageing" room, where prisoners folded and refolded the forgeries and by this method gave them a well-used appearance. Kruger, whose unruffled confidence reminded Berger of a ringmaster at work, explained that the notes had been divided into three groups. The top specimens were earmarked for Berger, but those which fell short of the first grade, although excellent duplications, would be distributed in territories dominated by Germany. The third and final grade would be kept against the day when it was deemed most favourable to flood Britain with bogus currency. "Himmler is greatly struck on this idea," said Kruger, "and believes it will disrupt life there more quickly than all the bombs the Luftwaffe can unload."

Supporting this colony of counterfeiters was a staff of technical

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workers—research chemists, photographers and laboratory assistants, whose job it was to test paper and inks and to overlook the making of the plates from which the notes were printed.

Kruger's prisoners, whose pallor revealed how long they had already spent in confinement, were a polyglot crowd—Czechs, Poles, Germans and other nationalities. They were not allowed to exercise in the camp or to receive visitors. Neither could they write or receive letters. They were completely isolated and had they been imprisoned on an island fortress in mid-ocean they could not have been more remote from the outside world. Kruger had made no bones about what would happen to them should Hitler be defeated. They must have known, too, that if illness or disease impaired their usefulness, they would not be allowed to survive very long.

While they retained their skill, however, they were well looked after, and suffered no shortage of food. They had as many cigarettes as they needed, and they were given a generous allowance of beer or schnapps. They were compelled to attend lectures given by two instructors from the *Reichsdruckerei*, whose job it was to instruct and advise all new additions to the counterfeiting corps.

One of these instructors, an elderly man with white hair, explained to Berger that not even the Bank of England would be able to detect the forgeries unless it so happened that the duplication of a serial number was revealed by the presence of the genuine note. Conversant with banking practice, Berger realized that months, perhaps years, might elapse before banknotes spent abroad could reach Britain. It was the custom of banks everywhere to sort out damaged and defaced currency and surrender it against credit to the national bank in question. In the case of British banknotes—and it was common practice in most countries—the Bank of England would be notified of such currency being held and then an arrangement would be made for its destruction before appointed witnesses to be followed by the replacement of new notes. Transactions of this nature were

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largely a matter of accountancy and actual cash transactions were almost unknown between friendly countries.

Although he was very much a man of the world Berger had experienced little contact with people outside his own social milieu, but nevertheless his interest in the camp's prisoners was a shade above professional curiosity. They didn't know his identity and imagined he was some Nazi big-wig on a tour of inspection. He found them talkative, particularly a gipsy named Smolianoff* whom Kruger confided was a gifted craftsman and probably the ablest counterfeiter in the camp. He was a wonderful engraver and etcher and could forge cheques, bonds, certificates and banknotes with equal skill.

Swarthy, and with a mop of grey hair, Smolianoff had a police record which began in 1928 when he had been sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Amsterdam for uttering forged pound notes. He used many aliases—Matheus Werner, Hugo Lidal and Nathaniel Gardner—but he was often tripped up and in 1936 was again in trouble for counterfeiting. He served this sentence in Germany, but when Kruger's agents looked for him he was traced to Warsaw where he had been arrested because he was by birth a gipsy. Under Nazi law he was regarded as belonging to inferior stock and was, therefore, condemned to be sterilized. Before this could take place he was sent to Sachsenhausen where he agreed to lend his skill to Operation Bernhard.

He said to Berger with a great gust of laughter: "I like it here, it's Paradise for me. Good food and every comfort except women. Fancy being able to forge currency under Government protection when I've been thrown into prison so many times for doing it without permission!"

Berger asked himself if this man could be sane, but then Smolianoff produced some pictures he had drawn of his

* Smolianoff was picked up by American security guards and promptly offered to forge roubles for them. He boasted that his work was known to the U.S. Treasury and that the counterfeit dollars he had made for the Nazis were the finest forgeries ever turned out. He was handed over to the German authorities and later dealt with.

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companions and even one of Major Kruger. They were crude, but brilliantly executed, and indicated what he might have become had his circumstances been different. He had started life as a revolutionary and his wife and child had been killed by the police in a street fight in Poland. It had affected his mind but he was still highly intelligent and was anxious to hear from Berger what was being shown at the latest art exhibitions.

Anybody less self-centred than Berger might have been repelled by the Sachsenhausen visit. The presence of Major Kruger was itself an affront to human decency and the way he bragged of being able to turn out millions of British pounds—as if he himself were doing the work not the prisoners—was insufferable particularly when one remembered what was in store for the captives. But Berger, seemingly, was not touched by the plight of fellow-creatures.

After seeing all that was essential to the plan he walked out of Sachsenhausen with a single impression—the feeling of power implicit in the possession of £50,000 worth of forged currency which reposed in his satchel.

He never visited the place again, but on his return to Berlin he gave his wife, who had anxiously awaited him, a fairly full account of everything that had happened. And such was his indifference to certain brutal aspects of Operation Bernhard that he failed to realise just how much he revealed to Lisa. She, on her part, listened carefully, without interrupting her husband, and now she comprehended, more than ever before, exactly what was involved in becoming a Nazi.

SEVEN

Lisa must have felt that a diary was not to be used as a ledger, but was intended, like a cardiograph, to record the beat of the heart. She reveals that many of her friends tried to convince her of Kurt's conquest of other women—which she refused to believe—but missing from the evidence she left behind are the vital

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details which would have supplied the total of all the spurious currency she and her husband disposed of during the war years.

Nor does she write frankly of her relationship with other men, although it is quite clear that she must have deceived her husband more than once. An Italian lawyer, involved in the forgeries, killed himself when she refused to divorce Kurt and marry him, and, shortly afterwards, she figured in another scandal while peddling Sachsenhausen banknotes for Major Kruger in Spain. The wife of a wealthy Andalusian became jealous and tried to spray her with a jet of vitriol which, quite literally, missed its mark. One can sense Lisa's shudder of recollection as she writes of her escape.

As I have already indicated, Lisa was not a ledger clerk otherwise the Bergers' part in Operation Bernhard could have been reduced to a round cash figure. From what I learned from the records kept by many foreign banks it is clear that the pair distributed at least £3,000,000 of faked money in Switzerland, Turkey and the Middle East. Kurt was involved with other agents, too, in other sums that infiltrated France, Holland and the Scandinavian countries and were used to buy certain war supplies for Germany.

It will be remembered that on his visit to Sachsenhausen Berger came away with £50,000 and it was actually with this money that he and his wife played what was virtually the opening gambit in Operation Bernhard. With it they went to Switzerland, Lisa very apprehensive, and her husband no longer full of the jubilant confidence he had expressed to Major Kruger. Nowhere does Lisa write more plaintively and searchingly than about this critical try-out, which was to provide the pattern for all subsequent swindles.

Although everything went well for them and Kurt became convinced as never before that the plot was foolproof Lisa was not reassured. She was unnerved, ardent Nazi as she was, by the certainty that of all those involved in this criminal enterprise—Himmler, Kruger and the rest of the plotters—she and Kurt

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alone stood to be nailed if the forgeries became suspect. The accretion of danger grew with every fresh enterprise—this much she understood.

From the very start of the journey to Switzerland Lisa's fears were intensified by the presence of the chauffeur Major Kruger had chosen to drive the Mercédès-Benz in which they left Berlin. He was a squat, repellent bully-boy named Heinz Lauterbach and soon it became plain that he held a watching brief for Kruger. On the journey to Zürich, via Konstanz and the Bodensee, he irritated the Bergers by his familiarity and his zest for telling dirty stories.

There was no difficulty at the border since Kurt Berger possessed a courier passport and carried letters for Nazi officials in Berne and Zürich, at which latter place they arrived the following day. Accommodation had been reserved at the exclusive *Baur au Lac* hotel and as soon as Lauterbach had been got rid of (he was staying at a smaller hotel) Lisa begged her husband not to do anything for a few days but enjoy a holiday and a rest. In her recollections of this visit Lisa describes how she embraced her husband and whispered that she was anxious to enjoy a second honeymoon with him. Kurt, whom she says never lost his tenderness for her, agreed, but for a more practical reason. He realized he was sufficiently well known to be recognized by British agents and he wanted to give the impression that he was in Zürich with his wife solely for a short holiday.

The Bergers tried to appear gayer than they felt. They strolled along the shores of the beautiful lake and Lisa pointed out the spot where she and her young friends used to meet every Sunday for a picnic and a little fishing. It was there, too, she had fallen in love for the first time. But the young man eventually left her for another girl whose time was freer, since Lisa was then practising the piano eight hours a day, determined to become a celebrity. She tried to project herself into the past by visiting the house where she was born, the graves of her parents and the *Konzerthaus* where often she had played. On the third day of their stay Lisa

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received a letter from her son telling her of his promotion as a lieutenant and in the church, where she had been confirmed and received communion, she prayed for Bernhard's safety.

But whenever they came in sight of the Swiss Kredit Bank, the Bergers seemed to shed their gaiety. The bank was a solid building whose façade, they both felt, could change so easily to that of a prison. It was at this bank they would have to hazard their good name and liberty, for the time was approaching when they could no longer postpone offering the Sachsenhausen forgeries as genuine currency.

They became victims of a tension which was hardly endurable. This much is implicit in an entry made by Lisa at the time.

"Now I know," she writes, "what an accused person must feel while awaiting the decision of the court. Even if it is delayed only for a few minutes surely such intense suffering must expiate any crime. It is incredible that Kurt and I are faced with a situation which may end in complete disaster."

Lisa's suggestion of a second honeymoon was just a pathetic attempt to cover up her fears and a little later Kurt and she were relieved to leave Zürich for a brief visit to Berne, where Berger had letters to hand over to the legation there. The minister was away and the banker and his wife were received by Dr. Paul Reichelt, the first secretary. At dinner that night Reichelt could talk of nothing but Hitler's victories and the way in which the panzers had smashed through Belgium and France. He was an armchair strategist, but not alert enough to know that the legation sheltered a certain individual named George who not only had access to every secret German document but sent copies of them to the U.S. Secret Service. The visit of the Bergers, who stayed only one night in Berne, was reported by this agent.

On the drive back to Zürich Lauterbach said it was now time to get on with the real purpose of their visit and Kurt had to agree. Any further delay would only increase his anxiety and when they got back to the *Baur au Lac* Berger immediately

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telephoned the Swiss Kredit Bank and arranged to see one of its directors, Herr Anton Hurlimann, the following day. To forget their troubles Kurt and Lisa attended a pianoforte recital that night, but Lisa was much too depressed to sit out the performance and did not stay long. The Bergers walked back to their hotel to face a sleepless night and Kurt was gloomy enough to remind his wife that it might be the last time they would be together. He now felt surrounded by dangers he had failed until then to foresee and said to Lisa: "Kruger has a dozen agents working for him at least and it needs only one of them to turn informer to wreck the scheme."

Lisa recalls that at that moment she felt stronger than her husband and went over to his bed, where he lay stiff with fear, took his hand and said: "We mustn't give way to terror. Nobody is likely to suspect a person in your position. Whoever heard of a banker passing queer money? It's too ridiculous."

There was no doubt that Kurt had other anxieties, but it was he who first fell asleep. Lisa had not drawn the curtains and the room was lit softly by a full moon. Against all caution she began to write in her diary, seated at a table under the window from where she could see the mountains which rose beyond the great lake. "If only I could escape from this world to another planet where there is nothing but music—it would be the happiness I have never so far found."

Next morning the Bergers went to the bank, where Herr Hurlimann was waiting for them. Kurt knew him very well, but Lisa had never met him. He was a stout and jovial little man, somewhat past middle age, who exclaimed when introduced to Lisa; "*Habe die Ehre*. It is a privilege to meet a famous artist. I hope I shall have the pleasure of attending the concert which must have brought you to Zürich."

Lisa shook her dark head. "I'm afraid not," she said. "We are here just for a short holiday."

"And a little business," added Berger.

As he poured out sherry for his visitors and offered them

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cigarettes Hurlimann said: "Let's leave business for a moment. Tell me about the war and what is happening in Germany."

Before Kurt could answer, Hurlimann went on: "I know, you don't want to talk about the wretched affair. Perhaps you are thinking of settling here. If so, I'll do what I can for you."

Lisa, sitting close to the director's desk, laid her hand on his arm and answered: "We should like nothing better. Switzerland is my country and Zürich is my home. But our son is in the Wehrmacht and there is no question of our escaping from Germany. Perhaps, though, you will be able to help us. My husband will explain."

Berger accepted the cue. "As you know," he said to Hurlimann, "I am an Austrian and it was a sad day for many of my countrymen when the Nazis marched into our homeland. I don't want to talk about it or of what is happening in Europe, except to say that we would have left Germany but for our son. We want him to be with us and until that is possible there can be no question of our living in Switzerland."

Hurlimann said he understood their dilemma and Berger began a further explanation.

"Against the day when we can settle here," he said, "I have brought with me British currency to the value of £50,000 for exchange. I intend leaving part of it with you, not, of course, in my own name because it would be dangerous. If the Nazis found out about this money, which came to me through the black market in Berlin, it would mean imprisonment for life."

Hurlimann had listened to similar requests before, and was aware that money was being smuggled out of Germany into his country and paid into various banks under fictitious names. It was an insurance against the future taken by several prominent Nazis.

As Berger opened a brief-case and produced the money he explained: "I shall try and bring out more later, but in the meantime it will be as well for this currency to be examined even though I am convinced that it is genuine."

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Hurlimann laughed and reminded Berger that nobody had yet succeeded in faking British currency. To reassure his friend, however, he would have a few specimens tested.

Berger replied that it did no harm to be cautious, particularly in wartime when all kinds of queer things were happening. He was given a receipt and the director suggested there was no reason why Berger or his wife should not open an account in names other than their own and take over a safe deposit as well.

"We are willing to administer any funds or assets which you may bring out of Germany," he added.

Berger finished his sherry and as he did so Hurlimann said he would telephone him at the *Baur au Lac* the next day so that he might not be under any doubt about the currency he had deposited.

"*Gruetzi*," said Lisa.

"*Gruss Gott*," answered the director.

Berger nodded and shook hands with his old friend and there the matter was left for the time being. But in the hotel that night Berger began to drink heavily while Lisa wrote letters to her son and a cousin in Geneva. Kurt paced up and down the room and then suggested it might be a good idea if he called on Hurlimann the next day, rather than wait to hear from him.

"I don't think that would be very clever," said Lisa.

"It would give you and Lauterbach a chance to find protection at the consulate here before it is too late."

Berger then began to explain the various ways by which experts could condemn the forgeries and Lisa sat silently as he talked of comparisons, temperatures and other technical factors. Her husband, she could see, was torturing himself and at last she said sharply: "You've had too much to drink. Forget everything and go to bed, you'll feel better after a rest."

Hurlimann telephoned soon after breakfast and suggested that Berger should meet him after banking hours. Kurt talked the proposal over with Lisa and Lauterbach and said he didn't like the look of it.

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"Don't get cold feet," Lauterbach advised him. "Nobody is going to run you in, nor me for that matter." Lauterbach tapped the shoulder holster that he always wore. He grinned and said: "We have a friend here we can rely on."

Kurt, who was not usually demonstrative, kissed Lisa before he left that afternoon to keep his appointment with Hurlimann. He had told Lauterbach to park the car in a *konditorei* near the bank and wait there with Lisa. Should he fail to appear within a couple of hours Lauterbach was to go to the consulate with Lisa.

Berger was under the stress which every individual must experience in committing his first offence, but he was clear in his mind as to everything which happened once he had rung the bell at the bank and secured admission. In fact, when the crisis had passed, he was able to repeat, almost word for word, to Lisa the conversation between himself and Hurlimann. His anxiety, he told her, dropped away from him like a cloak even before Hurlimann appeared, smiling and affable. The director wanted to know why Lisa had not come along and when Kurt explained that she had a migraine Hurlimann said he hoped she would be well enough to be present at the dinner he had arranged that evening.

"I'm a bachelor, Berger, as you know," he said, "and I am sure your wife would prefer to go to a restaurant."

"Of course," answered Berger. "Lisa will have recovered by this evening and we shall be delighted to join you."

Hurlimann then produced a cheque already signed, but on which the amount had yet to be filled in. "I told you it was impossible to forge British notes," he reminded Berger, who was his old self for the first time since he had arrived in Zürich.

Hurlimann wanted to know how the money was to be exchanged and Berger said he would like half the amount in Swiss francs to be transferred to an account for which he would use an alias. The remainder he wanted in American dollars of which he would take half in cash and place the balance to the credit of his wife in an account with the First National Bank of New York.

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The director said it could be done without any difficulty and then produced the forms and signature cards for Berger to sign. As he did so Berger suggested that a rate of two per cent would meet the charges for the exchange. Hurlimann was agreeable so far as the Swiss francs were concerned but he insisted on four per cent being charged for the dollars. Berger tried to talk him round but it was no good and he gave in. His account with the bank was registered in the name of Henry A. Taylor and he was given the key of a safety deposit box. He shook hands with Hurlimann, promised to do other business with him and walked out of the bank a vastly different person than when he had entered.

Four hours later, at dinner, Kurt, Lisa and Hurlimann drank toasts to enduring friendship, to their son Bernhard who was now a lieutenant, and to a speedy peace. The director had brought with him the documents for Lisa to sign respecting her account in New York. It was in the name of B. Cohn.

Lauterbach had the car waiting for them early next morning and as they drove out of Zürich Kurt began to talk of the immense possibilities of Operation Bernhard. His share in the swindle was about 20,000 dollars, which was not a fortune to a man of his wealth. But the smooth passage of the Zürich plot had restored Berger's early confidence and he was ready to believe that not even the Bank of England could detect the forgeries.

Lisa, however, had not forgotten the desperate anxiety of the past few days, although she refrained from reminding her husband. But there is a diary entry which says: "There is now no turning back for Kurt and I. I pray that the war will end soon and in victory. It is our only hope."

EIGHT

As an exercise in international larceny Operation Bernhard was ingenious, convincing and, for a long time, weather-proof. The Nazis' big steal of the rare and lovely treasures from countries

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incapable of defending their possessions was not to be compared with the skill of the Sachsenhausen forgers. Embedded in the death camp they transmuted paper and ink into almost flawless imitations which deceived banking experts unaccustomed to being outsmarted.

According to Lisa, she and her husband made the trip to Zürich on four occasions without Hurlimann ever suspecting that the British notes they offered for exchange were worthless. Berger was able to open fresh accounts in New York into which money was transferred from South Africa, Spain and Sweden.

Himmler, no longer troubled by the scarcity of foreign currency, raised no objection when Lisa asked that she might be allowed to continue her career as a pianist. She wanted a respite from the tension, although when she went to Finland to play, Kruger told her that her old friend, Major Cornelius, would meet her in Helsinki and hand over a parcel of currency. This led to the collision with the Soviet agent Prokov, which I have described earlier in this story. It was a stroke of luck for Lisa that the Russian never guessed she was the peddler's contact, and she must have realized this for her diary reference to the incident simply says: "Not even for Himmler could I be persuaded ever to visit Finland again. That monstrous Russian frightened me more than any other man has ever succeeded in doing."

At full pressure Operation Bernhard was able to provide funds to finance Nazi activities in Mexico, Honduras, Argentina, Costa Rica, Japan and America, and the agents for the counterfeit trade were none other than Germany's diplomatic personnel in these countries. Closer home, in Turkey in fact, Major Kruger financed the famous Cicero plot in which Eliaza Bazna, an Albanian spy who had become butler to the British Ambassador in Istanbul, microfilmed top-secret documents including the minutes of the Yalta and Teheran meetings and details of the proposed Allied landings in Sicily.* Bazna sold the information to Franz

* Although Von Papen alerted the Berlin Chancellery the Nazis failed to act on the information.

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von Papen, then Nazi Ambassador to Turkey, but it was Major Kruger who paid the bill—£300,000 in Sachsenhausen counterfeit to Bazna who was unaware that he had been gypped.

The chronology of the events set down by Lisa in her diaries shows that when the Bank of England caught its first glimpse of the organized fraud, and began to sound a warning, Major Kruger, who knew what was taking place, kept the Bergers in ignorance.

The Bank of England has a monastic tradition and, consequently, has never revealed the staggering cost to the country of Operation Bernhard. Neither has a word ever been said of the discovery itself. But it is a virtual certainty that it came about in the way Berger had nervously foretold—by some official noticing the duplication of a serial number. The standard of counterfeiting could not but convince the experts of Threadneedle Street of the power and disruptive ability of the Nazi currency offensive. The first trickle of fake notes must have presaged the flood that quickly was to follow and soon banks and credit organizations in every part of the world were being supplied with lists of serial numbers known to be fraudulent.*

Although the Nazis soon learned of these counter-measures, and of the hunting of counterfeit-pushers by British and American Treasury agents in Europe and elsewhere, the factory at Sachsenhausen continued its monthly yield of thousands of fake notes. Operation Bernhard had lost its most valued clients, but there was still a market for queer money among the criminal elements—smugglers, dope peddlers and black marketeers. It was left to Major Kruger to make new arrangements to circulate the forgeries.

In May 1914 Himmler sent for Kurt Berger and told him of a switch in the technique of Operation Bernhard. Foreign currency

* Early in 1915 the Bank of England called in all banknotes exceeding £5 and in October of the same year set a time limit for the surrender of all £5 notes in circulation for exchange for a new issue, made of thicker paper, and containing a metal thread.

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was no longer needed and, in future, the Sachsenhausen notes would be used to buy gold, as much as could be found. Berger, so Lisa explains, was perfectly aware that neutral banks were now wise to the fraud, but he remained silent while Himmler spoke to him of a certain Luigi Carbone whom he would meet in Rome. Carbone, one of the king-pins of the city's underworld, was known to have bought an enormous quantity of gold from Yugoslav and Greek dealers and was willing to trade in British currency. He was cunning and probably untrustworthy, though, and would need careful watching.

Himmler instructed Berger to take Lisa and Lauterbach with him to Rome, and if he swung the deal with Carbone a unit of the Nazi Motor Korps would take the gold through Austria into Germany. A radio operator named Paul Hartmann would also go along with the party and would contact Himmler's department whenever necessary. Himmler advised Berger to arm himself and said the Italian Government would certainly try to prevent the smuggle if it ever got wind of it.

The interview ended with handshakes and Himmler, so Kurt told Lisa, assured the banker that his work for the Nazi movement would not be forgotten. Kurt would have preferred the Gestapo chief to have chosen some other for the Rome mission, but he was in no position to refuse, nor dared he have done so even had he known that Allied intelligence had been alerted that the Mafia had smoothed the way for the deal in gold between Carbone and Himmler's representative.

Now although it may appear an incredible coincidence, and altogether too pat to be believed, I have been able to reconstruct this affair in Italy not only from the evidence supplied by Lisa, but from my own personal knowledge of the part played by our own agents against the Berger-Carbone tie-up. Once it became known that the Nazis were preparing to unload Sachsenhausen notes in Italy my old friends, Arvid Andersen, Einar and Ivar—with whom I had worked in Helsinki—were flown to Geneva.

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Awaiting them there was Allan Ramsey, a courageous British agent.

A Swiss guide ferried them across Lake Maggiore to the Italian side one dark night when the moon was masked by cloud and they got ashore without mishap. It was bitterly cold and the danger of tangling with a patrol was so great that they had to crawl almost the whole of the distance which lay between them and their objective, a warden's hut. The guide tapped gently on the door of the hut, whispered his name, and a moment later the little party stepped inside to meet Giuseppe Bazzi, who had come from Palermo and was to act as their escort.

Bazzi was a small, grizzled man bent with rheumatism, but he was absolutely fearless and the men knew at once they were safe with him. He was the Allied contact man inside the Mafia and it was he who had been asked to approach Carbone and fix up the deal in gold. He had kept Allied intelligence informed on every move which had taken place since his first meeting with Carbone.

The party did not move out of the hut until after daybreak, when Bazzi led them to the nearest village, where they picked up a bus for Milan. All of them spoke German convincingly and carried Nazi passports and documents. They were supposed to be civilians who had been sent to do maintenance work at German military depots in Italy. In Milan, with Bazzi's help, they caught the night train for Rome and although police entered their carriage at every stop they were never seriously challenged. As soon as they arrived in Rome Bazzi took them to a hide-out to await the moment of action.

By then, of course, the Berger entourage was settled in the city and Kurt had already met Carbone. From Lisa we learn that the banker seriously doubted at first of the deal ever materializing. He had been primed concerning Luigi Carbone's history and he hardly found it inspiring.

Carbone was a gangster who had been deported from America soon after the war had started and he had now imposing offices on the Via Barberini and manufactured machine-guns for reluc-

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tant Fascists. On his return from America he had at first settled in Sicily and had outraged his old parents by living openly, and without benefit of clergy, with an ex-beauty queen named Dotty O'Connor who had followed him into exile.

The day came when the police raided the villa he occupied and discovered that he was doing big business in drugs, but before he could be questioned he fled with his girl friend to Rome. Soon after his arrival he visited a prominent police official and assured him that he intended to live quietly. In fact, he had decided to start life anew and intended investing his money in legitimate enterprise.

Carbone's wealth was such that he quickly made influential friends who advised him to donate handsomely to Fascist Party funds and, shortly afterwards, he was given war contracts that promised to make him a fresh fortune. He installed Dotty in a nineteen-room mansion sheltered by pine trees and cypresses. It also contained a separate suite for his bodyguards.

When Carbone realized that he was to be paid for his gold in British currency (he apparently never suspected the double-cross), and that Berger had some millions of money to play with, he picked up Kurt one night in his Cadillac and drove the banker to an old castle near Lake Trasimene. In the course of the journey Carbone mentioned that he could offer gold bars to the value of £4,000,000 and gold coins worth £300,000. They reached the castle and Berger was led through its dark entrance, along a passage, and then down some stairs leading to an enormous cellar. It was piled high with boxes and cases and Berger understood at once that Carbone was not only an arms factor but had broken into the black market.

They had a drink together and then the real business began. Carbone showed Berger the gold bars, already packed in stout boxes, and then led him to a row of fish tanks which lined one side of the wall. They contained the coins he had told Berger about and they were an astonishing collection. Gold relics of the old Austrian Empire, Spanish pieces showing the faces of Ferdinand

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and Isabella, double excellentes of the sixteenth century, Ecud'ors, double ducats, Genoese quadruples, Medici coins and double Louis à la mèche court. Berger was mightily impressed.

Despite a dislike of his flamboyant acquaintance Berger could not but admire his business acumen. When the inspection was over it was too late to assess the gold and Carbone suggested that this could be done later. One of Berger's men could be driven to the castle and the gold could then be weighed and a price agreed upon.

It was three o'clock in the morning before Berger returned to his hotel and Lisa's fears for his safety were dispelled.

I have never been able to discover what Berger paid Carbone for all the gold that was sold to him, but it must have been an enormous figure. Anyhow the deal was completed and Hartmann advised Gestapo headquarters in Berlin of the amount of Sachsenhausen banknotes that were now required. A few hours later Berger learned of a change in Himmler's plans. He was to arrange to send the gold to a place on the Adriatic coast where a German cruiser would take it on board for Yugoslavia. It would then be put on rail for Germany via Austria.

Carbone agreed to make the necessary arrangements and the plan was made known to Andersen, Ramsey and the others through Bazzi. The ex-gangster sent for Bazzi and proposed that since the Mafia would receive its cut of the deal it should provide a number of reliable men and trucks to get the gold to the Adriatic coast. Andersen got into touch with his superiors and it was suggested that the scheme could be wrecked by giving Allied airmen a chance to bomb the castle. Andersen didn't like the idea because he was convinced that he could grab both gold and fake notes.

He was left to act on his own, but unluckily for Andersen and the others Carbone, instead of waiting for the men Bazzi had promised to recruit, found his own crew and trucks and one night, in the presence of Berger, Lauterbach and Hartmann, loaded fifteen hundred cases of gold and sent it to a nearby

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railway station where it was transferred to a waiting freight train. Carbone, who prided himself on always fulfilling a deal, decided to go along with the train and joined Berger and his party, along with the truck drivers and his own bodyguard.

The gold was already rolling when Andersen learned what had happened and he sent a frantic message to headquarters asking for help. He was informed that planes would be sent out to try to halt the passage of the train and that a unit of British commandos would try to overtake it.

Carbone was a wily customer, however, and the train had not gone far when he spotted a plane and advised Berger that they were in danger. The train was shunted into a tunnel and stayed there for a day and a half. When it moved out at last the track lay along a valley hemmed in by mountains and it had not gone many miles before it was sighted by a couple of light bombers. Everybody flattened out, but the bombs missed the train and tore up part of the track.

It took five hours to make good the damage and then the train moved off once more. Near Ferrara it was seen by a company of marines from a German cruiser lying off shore. The men had got hold of a few trucks, but it wasn't possible for them to load more than 200 boxes when they were recalled to the ship. The cruiser was being bombed and its commander was not prepared to risk being sunk.

Once again the train rolled forward, but at a wayside station Carbone and Berger heard news of an Allied break-through in the valley and realized the train could take them no farther. They scouted for other transport and found an Italian military depot and persuaded its commander to release twenty-seven trucks. With local help the boxes were piled into the trucks and the convoy moved off. The journey to Ancona took many hours and was a nightmare. Twice the convoy was bombed and men killed, and there were interminable delays at river crossings and in the drive through shattered villages. Two trucks had to be abandoned, but the gold reached Ancona intact. A destroyer was waiting

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to take it on board, but the port was being bombed and it left to zig-zag its way out to sea with only 300 boxes. It escaped the pursuing planes only to be torpedoed later. The same fate met the other German ship so that the 500 boxes of gold they had carried away between them were lost off the Dalmatian coast.

Carbone and the Berger party managed to get the remaining gold out of Ancona and drove south with it into Sicily, but that was all the luck they ever had—that and the way in which they managed to save themselves. The gold, which had cost hundreds of lives and those of Ramsey, Andersen, Einar and Ivar, who were killed awaiting the landings on the island, was handed over when the Allies took Sicily.

NINE

The final phase of Operation Bernhard rightly belongs to the story of Germany's last hours before the capitulation and the confusion and ruin that had come upon her. The underground factory at Redl Zipf was only a makeshift—a shadow of Sachsenhausen expertise, just as Germany's beaten armies were the pale ghosts of once triumphant panzer hordes. And at that moment the Bergers, who had fled to the Alpine retreat in Austria, were facing their own bitter crisis. Lisa was shortly to write the last entry in her diary—the last sad testament to despair before death overtook her and her husband.

Before this was to happen, many pages back in her record, she speaks of her anguish over the death of her son. It is still 1944 and she has left Kurt in Rome with Carbone and returned to Berlin. She tells it herself: "As I opened the door of my house I suddenly realized what awaited me. I walked over to the *Herrenzimmer* where Hilde, my maid, had arranged in neat piles all the letters that had arrived in my absence. I knew at once where the letter was to be found and I picked it out unerringly from all the others—the letter from the War Department telling me that Bernhard was no more."

Traitor in Pigtails

had warned all Americans not to travel to Japan. They even refused to issue passports, so young Iva went without one. Later she suddenly faced the bitter fact that she could not return to America; she had missed the last chance, the last boat back. While she was searching for transportation home to her parents, who ran a grocery store in Chicago, the bombs fell on Pearl Harbour—and the war had begun. The Sons of the Rising Sun were marching towards an Asia for the Asiatics under Japanese dictatorship.

"I could not believe it," she said. "I was dazed for many days. Then I was arrested by the Japanese as an enemy alien, though later released."

Iva bought her freedom for a price. A high price: treason.

The former university student then became known to every soldier in the Pacific as Tokyo Rose.

First she went on the air as Ann, short for announcer; then she changed her name to "Orphan Annie, your playmate." She opened her broadcasts with the provoking words, "Good evening again to the . . . forgotten men, the American fighting men . . ." and the Japanese propaganda was intermingled with American swing, blues and folk songs.

Her wages at the beginning were very small, not more than a hundred yen or six dollars a month . . . "which was not enough to live on." Later on it was raised to a hundred and forty-seven yen.

Iva claims she was forced into this work. She also told a love story. The man who forced her into this treacherous propaganda was very fond of her, and she did not dare reject him. It was the old story: Iva went the easiest way, as The Cat had done before her, and as many a woman agent had done in many a war.

Iva said she was only a disc jockey, reading scripts and playing records, and that the continuity was written by a Captain Charles Cousins, an Australian captured at Singapore, and a United States army captain named Ince.

Early in the Pacific war Tokyo Rose had a tremendous following on the air. She was new to the American soldiers, whose radio

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sets could not get American stations. She was the next best to listen to, and both she and the Japanese knew it.

The boys were starving to hear American dance music. Tokyo Rose gave it to them. In turn came her propaganda and undermining talks, well prepared by these gravediggers of democracy. Once when the Seabees were working feverishly and secretly on an airfield in the Marshall Islands, Tokyo Rose came on the air, identified the island, told the soldiers they would be bombed soon, and said: "Confidentially, boys—your strip is showing." She ended the announcement with a cynical laugh.

On June 14th, 1944, she went on the air with her slangy, vernacular American and identified herself as "your favourite enemy, Orphan Annie."

"Hi, boys! this is your old friend," she broadcast. "I've got some swell new recordings for you, just in from the States. You'd better enjoy them while you can, because tomorrow at 0600 you're hitting Saipan . . . and we're ready for you. So, while you're still alive, let's listen to . . ."

Other broadcasts followed in the same vein. During the zero hour of American landings in the Pacific, she said:

"You boneheads of the Pacific, if you expect to get home, you'd better start now. Haven't you heard the fleet is about gone? . . ."

"I wonder who your wives and girl friends are out with tonight? Maybe some 4-F. . . ."

"The Americans have lost all their ships at Leyte Gulf and don't know how they'll get home."

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Almost every spy and traitor must have thought the Axis would win. They couldn't have given the future much thought.

Iva was sure she would never be detected. There were other American and Canadian women doing these broadcasts, and hers was only one of the seven voices. After VJ day, when she was sitting in the dining room of the fashionable Bund Hotel in Tokyo, the Japanese betrayed her, and so did her own honey-

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voiced talk. In her girlish pigtails, dressed like a teenager, wide-eyed, smiling, and wondering, she sat in front of the three American soldiers who had arrested her and said: "I'm innocent. I have done nothing." She looked and behaved like a little schoolgirl. One soldier said afterward: "If she'd been on television she wouldn't have lasted a week." She just couldn't believe she had done anything wrong.

Clerk Lee, a former war correspondent, testified at the trial that when he had interviewed Tokyo Rose in September 1945 he asked her if she didn't feel she was doing wrong in broadcasting enemy propaganda. She replied: "I had no particular feeling about it." She probably spoke the truth when she also told the reporter: "I needed the extra hundred yen they paid me."

The United States Government indicted her for wartime treason. A death sentence was possible. Still Iva could not understand how she could be that important. Her brother Fred said: "We knew nothing about all this until we saw it in the papers. She is just a kid."

The trial lasted twelve weeks. The Government compiled two million words of testimony; paid £7,500 to fly nineteen witnesses from Japan, even high-ranking Japanese officers. The evidence was overwhelming.

Still Iva declared she was innocent, and had been forced into the job. If she had wanted to be a traitress she would have become a Japanese citizen. She had never tried to undermine the morale of the American soldier, nor had she broadcast defeatism or lies or secret coded messages. Besides, she had married a Portuguese in 1945 and was now a Portuguese citizen; as a foreigner she could not be guilty of treason against the United States. It was a confused defence, playing up the "little child" who was thrown into treason without knowing it.

Then the Government replayed the records of her broadcasts. That took the defence by surprise; they had not expected that. The courtroom was filled with the atmosphere of war. After Rose had said she was not guilty, she had never harmed anyone with

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her words, the records played her words in all their cruel nakedness: "Orphans of the Pacific . . . how will you get home . . . now that all your ships are sunk?" and the harsh, cynical laughter at the end.

Record after record proved new guilt—treason, incitement to revolt, playing up to race hatred and bigotry, and the line that Negroes should not die for white men—the old Fascist routine.

Still Iva sat poker-faced. The court pointed out that she was not alone in this game—six others had helped her. And there were also Axis Sally and Mildred Elizabeth Gillars, who did the same thing in Nazi Germany. This was treason, and it was treason she must be judged for. Finally it was left to the jury.

They deliberated a long time. Tokyo Rose did not have pigtails now, but a permanent wave. She was dressed in a light-coloured suit with a sports shirt. She looked questioningly at the jury when they re-entered the courtroom; would they sentence her to death? No, they couldn't. Up to the last minute she was sure she would be freed; she had been forced into her job—besides, words over the radio didn't kill anyone; it was only like a play.

The verdict was a shock to her: ten years and a fine of \$10,000.

"No! this is not possible!" she cried. "I can't believe they would send me to jail."

But they did.

VI

Fake Refugees

THE war had made London a city of conglomerate nationalities. Uniforms of all the Allied countries were seen—Canadian, Mexican, Brazilian and Norwegian—as well as the trim uniforms of nurses from many nations. There was a daily influx of refugees. Many were patriots from Europe who had made daring escapes in small fishing boats. They were all subject to careful investigation, and their statements were checked by the various Governments-in-exile, and confirmed by messages from the underground patriots at home. No one was admitted into the country casually.

Nevertheless, there were bogus patriots and refugees who evaded the watchfulness of Scotland Yard. The Nazis were quick to recognize that the refugee game could be given a novel twist. Their agents wore the mask of refugees and dozens of spies were smuggled into London. The "escapes" were planned from the ground up. An extraordinary amount of care and cleverness went into the stratagems.

There was a twenty-seven-year-old Belgian, Joseph Jan Vanhoven by name. He had always been a firm patriot who shared the common dislike of his countrymen for the Germans. A waiter in Brussels' Hotel Cosmopolitan, he had to serve the arrogant German officers who made the hotel their restaurant. Vanhoven concealed his enmity from his customers. He was an exemplary waiter. For some reason he became a favourite of one of the officers. One day his patron, a smart German lieutenant named Eilenburg, told him a way of getting some meat for his family. "Go to the camp's quartermaster, ask for Heinrich and mention my name to him. He'll give you meat and cigarettes."

Occupied Belgium was starving; the Nazis had pillaged what

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they could; they had confiscated blankets for their troops in Russia. They had seized fishing boats, trolley cars, clothing, crops and livestock. The country was stripped bare. Vanhoven felt a rush of gratitude towards the lieutenant. His old father and mother had not eaten meat for many months. He followed the lieutenant's directions. At the camp he was given some packages of meat and about a dozen cartons of cigarettes.

The next day the waiter approached the German and thanked him humbly. Eilenburg laughed gaily and asked him if he would like such presents more often. He could go on getting the stuff if he would undertake to sell some on the black market and split the proceeds fifty-fifty with Eilenburg.

The lieutenant thought he was being bountiful in offering Vanhoven such a high share. "We Germans are always fair," he assured his pawn. Vanhoven became a black-market purveyor. The lieutenant urged him to sell more and more.

The black-market traffic went on for months. Eilenburg made some fifty thousand francs on the deals. He went to Paris, where he bought a mink coat and some latest-model frocks for his girl in Germany. In so doing, however, Eilenburg came under suspicion of the German Secret Service whose agents wondered where the lieutenant had obtained the money. They commenced investigations, and were disposed to believe that the lieutenant was involved in espionage.

Eilenburg was called to a hearing and questioned about the money. The hearing was under military auspices. His commanding officer, two Secret Service agents and a Gestapo official presided. They asked him bluntly: "Are you working for the British? Or have you any connections with the French Maquis?"

Eilenburg, caught unawares, trembled in his boots. This might mean execution. He broke down under the questions, and while he protested solemnly that he would never betray his Fatherland, he confessed that he had made money on the black-market. He was driven to do it by an ill-fated love affair. Some dancer in

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Munich, with whom he was desperately in love, demanded expensive presents.

The espionage case against Eilenburg was dropped. But retribution came in the form of a transfer to the Russian front. As for little Joseph Vanhoven, he heard nothing about it until the morning he was arrested. Three men called for him at the hotel, and still wearing his waiter's black frock coat he was marched off to Gestapo headquarters.

They told him that they knew about his black-market dealings. The examining officer was a certain Hans Junglau, who roughly told the Belgian: "You've been stealing army food which is an offence for which you can be shot."

Vanhoven pleaded for his life, stammering out that he never realized what he was doing. "I am only a poor man," he told the Nazis. "I did what the German lieutenant told me to do." He begged to be given another chance, in return for which he would do whatever they wished of him.

These were the circumstances that pushed Joseph Vanhoven into the career of German spy. Dead, the sallow, insignificant waiter was of no value to Germany. On the other hand, the Germans had need of agents in dangerous places. The Nazis therefore worked out a plan. A few days after his arrest newspaper notices appeared, naming the waiter of Hotel Cosmopolitan as an infamous black marketeer, dealing in stolen army food. The newspapers said that Vanhoven was being hunted all over Belgium, and had disappeared to escape arrest.

In the meantime Vanhoven was put into a German car and driven to Paris. There he busied himself looking up acquaintances in the underground. He showed them the clippings of the Belgian papers and explained that he was fleeing for his life. The French underground accepted Vanhoven as a fugitive from the Nazis. They took charge of him and whisked him from refuge to refuge. Finally they smuggled him over the Pyrenees, with the co-operation of professional smugglers. Vanhoven then made a beeline for the German Embassy in Madrid.

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There he was received by Herr Eberhard von Stohrer, the German Ambassador to Spain, who had always maintained a sprightly interest in espionage. He had filled the same position in Spain during World War I.

Stohrer enjoyed a reputation as a witty conversationalist. Diplomatic dinners and tea parties were convulsed by his well-turned jests. The ladies, too, adored him. He had been a close friend of Marshal Pétain when the latter was French Ambassador to Madrid. Stohrer knew Mussolini and Hitler personally. He had acted as procurer for the Secret Service, to which he introduced many Spanish agents.

The ambassador spoke to the timid waiter in French and with marked kindness. Vanhoven was quite overwhelmed in the presence of so distinguished an official. The ambassador begged him to relax. Vanhoven had done very well so far. He deserved a small holiday. The ambassador gave him money to take one. Berlin would soon send word of his forthcoming assignment.

Vanhoven was to employ his time with the writing of a detailed report of his experiences with the French Maquis and was to give names of the underground workers whom he had encountered.

The ambassador found Vanhoven's report very much to the point. The Belgian betrayed some members who had helped stranded Allied fliers return to England. He provided facts on secret radio operators. The report was forwarded to Berlin, with a strong recommendation by the ambassador.

The new orders duly arrived. Vanhoven was assigned to Britain. He was to run a secret radio transmitter, for which he was coached by an intensive course. A list of his espionage tasks would be handed to him in London.

The way was circuitous. First Vanhoven was to join the crew of a Spanish boat which delivered oranges to Sweden. Vanhoven complied. On arriving at Stockholm, he jumped his boat. As a fugitive patriot and member of the Belgian and French underground, Joseph Vanhoven presented himself at the British Embassy at Strandvägen. The British listened carefully, for this

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man had seen a lot. He brought out his Belgian certificate and told his story, which was borne out by the newspaper clippings. The waiter who had stolen food from the Germans to give to his starving countrymen was a bit of a hero. It was no wonder that the Germans had placed a price on his head. Vanhoven told the British that he frequently wished to enter Britain to join the Free Belgian Army.

Both the Belgian Government, which was consulted, and the British thought highly of this newest recruit. He was given a place on a courier plane and flown to England.

But Scotland Yard did not like the story. It was too smooth, too pat, a little odd that the man should have all his papers. They handled a great many refugees, the great majority of whom were honest patriots. But honesty was not taken for granted.

The German Ambassador had given Vanhoven an address in London. He was to contact the owner of a pub in the East End. After a few days in the city he drifted down that way. He strolled into the room, drank a few beers and asked as casually as he could for a Mr. Pearson.

They answered that there was no such person present. He must be in the wrong place. But before he left, someone tapped his shoulder and invited him to another drink.

This somebody said that he knew Mr. Pearson. He drew Vanhoven to a table for a beer, and there muttered that the order was for Vanhoven to work among the Belgian sailors. He was to try to join a Belgian merchant marine crew.

As a matter of fact, there was no Mr. Pearson. It served as a code word. This pub had been used as a "message box" over a period of years. Scotland Yard agents knew all about it, but forbore to close the place for the very good reason that it tipped them off to the arrival of a new spy, since all agents were sent to this pub for instructions.

Vanhoven, too, was left unmolested. He worked among the Belgian seamen, but his espionage assignment was abruptly terminated when, after three months, he and a few aides were

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arrested. Vanhoven was sentenced to be hanged at Wandsworth Prison. He made a full confession before he died and asked for a mitigation of the death sentence. He implored the British to understand that he had been forced into espionage, but to no avail.

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Despite initial failures, the Nazis liked the scheme of employing fake refugees. It seemed to be a method especially suited for espionage against Britain. That gallant island had become more of a stake than ever; the Americans were stationed there; commando raids were being organized from British bases; bomber formations took off and supplies were being amassed all over the country for the invasion troops. There was urgent need for hundreds of spies to infiltrate the island and keep the Nazis informed of developments.

Enemy agents had to speed their pace and sharpen their wits. A directive went out to the contact men in Britain to step up their activities.

The Allied Secret Services guessed to what lengths the Nazis would go and took an even more guarded attitude towards heroic escape stories. Not even confirmation from the underground was conclusive. Nothing was taken on trust.

In 1943 a Scotland Yard officer listened impassively to the following story. The narrator was an escaped patriot from Belgium named Eugene Timmerman. He sat in front of the officer's desk and gave a brief summary of his life. He was a young fellow, a native of Ostend and spoke a very respectable English, which he had picked up as a ship steward. For years he had been a worker in the Belgian underground, whose leaders vouched for him. He had made the Channel crossing in a small fishing boat. The Belgian Government-in-exile welcomed him and stood sponsor for him before the British authorities.

The courage shown by the young man commanded the respect

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of the Scotland Yard officer, though he took care not to show that. He cross-questioned the Belgian keenly.

Eugene Timmerman was spokesman for three others who had made the escape with him. Their adventure was perhaps the most daring that Scotland Yard had heard recounted. Eugene and three comrades were due to be deported as slave labourers to Germany. All four agreed to escape. The underground leaders knew about the plan, of which they warmly approved. They collected warm clothing and food for the runaways to take along.

The four knew the countryside well. Without incident they reached a small coastal village, where a fishing boat was waiting for them. In the boat were concealed fishermen's clothes, which they donned as disguises. A short way out to sea they were stopped by the Nazis on a routine harbour patrol but were accepted as ordinary fishermen out for the day's work.

The North Sea was rough and the little boat provided for them would not, it was obvious, weather the run to England. So Eugene and his friends decided to sail to one of the little islands off the coast. They lived there for three weeks in the role of fishermen. Nobody bothered them at all. Every day two of the group would stroll over to the nearest village to see about a boat which could take them to England. What they learned about the possibilities was depressing. The Germans had requisitioned thousands of Belgian fishing vessels. All remaining small craft had to be registered.

But the four did not give up. Their neighbours were on the lookout for a likely boat and in the meantime brought the adventurers food and money. Good patriots all, they would never have given the men away. At last a boat became available. It was a smallish fishing boat, built in 1910; its engine was very old and its timber rotten. It measured eighteen feet in length.

The group needed petrol and provisions and above all they needed a compass and some information on the Nazi minefields. By hook and crook they amassed what they needed. The petrol was stolen from a German army camp. Fishermen contributed

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food and information on the location of the minefields which they had gathered from their sea trips. Finally the boat pushed off from shore.

None of the young men was a trained navigator, but all knew how to handle boats. Eugene acted as captain, and the others were assigned to look after the motor, the rudder and the sails.

The night was cloudy, dark and cool. The minefield lay outside the three-mile territorial water zone. Within the three-mile zone, fishermen could come and go unrestricted. The four were thoroughly alarmed when the boat was stopped, still well within the zone. Happily enough, commented Eugene, it was so dark that the Nazis could not see how pale and nervous they were. It was a torpedo boat, whose officers ordered a search of the vessel. The search, luckily, was not a thorough one, but after the Germans left the young men kept up the pretence of fishing knowing they were still under observation. When morning came, German patrol planes gave them a signalled command to stay inside the three-mile limit. They had to cast anchor again and waste another day at mock fishing.

The following night Eugene decided it was now or never and by the following morning they had left the coast behind but had still far to go. The old boat showed a decided tendency to leak, so that they had to man the pumps often. They laboured all day and the next night had to face a storm. It raged for four days and when it finally ceased, the men were half dead from exhaustion and exposure. Then came the next shock. They saw a bomber overhead and realized that it must have spied them. If the plane were German, it was all up with them. Terrible moments intervened, until they saw the red-white-and-blue circle of the R.A.F. It was a Hudson bomber, and the boys went into a wild dance.

They quickly manufactured a white flag with which they gave the SOS signal. The plane responded with light signals promising to send help. An hour later they were picked up by a British destroyer, which the bomber had directed to the little boat.

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The four patriots were fed, warmed and bedded and on their arrival in this country the ordeal they had endured won them the sympathy of everyone. The Belgian Government was prompt in offering Eugene Timmerman a place in the Congo Department. The information the men were able to give about the minefields was very valuable. Eugene became a hero. He met old comrades of his, other escaped patriots who frequented the Belgian club, all of whom applauded him as the pluckiest of their company.

But one day when Timmerman was lounging at the Belgian club and telling his escape story once more, a new visitor dropped in. He paused at the doorway to the room. He was an officer of the Belgian Army and he gave Eugene Timmerman, who was unconscious of his presence, a long hard look. He remembered this man, remembered having seen him when he worked as a translator for the Gestapo in Brussels. The officer turned on his heel, left the club and went straight to Scotland Yard.

At six o'clock the next morning Timmerman's apartment was raided. A secret radio was found, a transportable type which could be fastened around the waist like a belt. Crystals and other equipment were discovered, as well as a bottle of invisible ink and specially prepared paper for its use. Timmerman had secreted in a drawer four hundred and seventy-five dollars in American currency and ninety-seven pounds ten shillings in English.

The spy had slipped past the guardians of the island. He had reported on American troop movements and on preparations in the Belgian Congo and had maintained correspondence with Nazi agents in Portugal, Spain and France. He had sent them copies of Belgian Government documents and given them the location of British ammunition dumps, air bases and naval installations.

Among letters Scotland Yard found one instructing Timmerman to "contact the British people where they are most themselves—as in buses, trains and public places."

The perilous escape had been made with Nazi connivance.

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The storm, of course, might have drowned the just with the unjust, for the curious part was that Timmerman's three comrades were honest patriots. They had been allowed to escape because they provided a cover of respectability for the spy. He had managed to worm his way into England, but there he was eventually hanged.

VII

Zaisser—Germany's Scourge

MANY Germans shudder whenever they hear the name of Wilhelm Zaisser mentioned, for he is known to them as the scourge of East Germany—the man who has plotted and murdered to sell his country to the Soviet Union. As a personal friend of Stalin, Malenkov and Beria, he wielded unbelievable power in East Germany and the Russian satellite countries. It was he who introduced Soviet anti-Semitism into Europe and supervised the blood purges in Czechoslovakia, Poland and the German provinces which Communists control. Hitler dreamed of a Germany without Jews. This man worked for a Germany without Germans.

Wilhelm Zaisser became the chief Secret Service agent of Communism, with headquarters in Berlin and branches in Prague, Warsaw, Vienna, Königsberg, Bonn and Saarbrücken.

Though officially Zaisser ruled over eighteen million East Germans, in practice his political espionage system stood in authority above the Communist Governments in all satellite countries. He was responsible only to his masters in Moscow.

After Zaisser's rule began in Communist East Germany, 50,000 people—all political "oppositionists"—were arrested, tortured and then executed.

With cool calculation he said once to friends who later escaped as ex-Communist refugees to Western Berlin: "Hitler could not kill all Communists: he had no Siberia. But we have it now—for our purposes."

Wilhelm Zaisser was not a Red agent in the accepted sense. He had a real contempt for Communist writers, scientists, actors

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and hated discussions on political theory. He was at heart a soldier and believed in action.

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Young Zaisser went over to Communism after the German revolution in 1918. Just as the famous Clausewitz served as general in the Russian Army of the Czars, so Zaisser was the first foreign general to serve in the Red Army—the only non-Russian who held that dubious honour.

He was the military adviser and evil genius during the civil war in Spain, and played a "Lawrence" in Arab countries. He worked both with and against Chiang Kai-shek in the Kuomintang. He brought, perhaps, more trouble, civil war and violence to the world than any other foreign emissary the Soviets ever had working for them—and they have had many.

Red Army General Wilhelm Zaisser established the Communist Government in East Berlin on the lines of a little Kremlin, a walled-in Government town where he resided with his fellow German quislings. When German Politbureau Communists accused him of not praising Stalin to the hilt, he smiled cynically and said: "You *have* to do it; you are politicians. I'm a military man and I leave the talking to people like you who have less to do. They understand me in Moscow."

No one dared to denounce him to Moscow for this heresy, knowing that Zaisser had more power in Russia than any other German Communist.

Inside Eastern Germany, Zaisser employed 4,000 specially trained, carefully chosen agents. Each one of the 4,000 knew he could never retire from office and could never escape. No Jews belonged to his group of agents, and no Catholics—as "you never know when they will return to God again." Zaisser once ordered a special research on Jews and Catholics in the field of espionage and came to the conclusion that too many had left the Communist movement.

Every secret agent of the Zaisser machine knew that other

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agents were watching him and that he was under constant surveillance. "I trust no one," Zaisser said once. "And I do not want to have any man in a superior position. He has to know that someone else gives the orders—all the time."

A deserter from the Zaisser police testified to American intelligence officers: "Zaisser addressed us once in a while and I heard him say: 'An officer of my security department who is not capable of whipping a prisoner to death if need be and doing it with his own hands, without a second thought, is of no use to my department.' " The old Himmler methods of concentration camps and modernized gas chambers have been re-established in the heart of Europe, thanks to General Zaisser, who was "security minister" of Eastern Germany.

Western intelligence officers have seen proof of these brutalities when deserters to the West displayed broken ribs, noses and limbs. There are thousands of affidavits available to the free world.

Who were the victims? Revolutionists who worked to overthrow the Communist Governments in Europe? No; a man in a *Bierstube* who joked about the Communist elections with only one candidate to vote for; people who had received packages from Western Germany and thanked the senders; a man who had written to his brother in Western Germany that an old friend of theirs had been drafted for the war in Korea; another man who told that his factory worked for Red China and that some people had been sent to Indo-China to fight.

Moscow sent Zaisser a monthly quota for slave labour deportations. He had to fill the East German quota not only from prisoners, but also from the manpower of East German industry.

In a report given by agents to Allied intelligence and the United Nations, it was said that Zaisser employed 50,000 informers. These were planted in all walks of life in factories and farm areas. In every house the caretakers had to report weekly to Zaisser's office about possible "enemies of the Communist State."

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Zaisser began his career as a lieutenant in the Imperial German Army. His home was in Essen, site of the Krupp works. During the French occupation when the Communists, led by Karl Radek (later executed), offered an alliance between Prussian nationalists and Russian Communists against the power of the French "invaders," Zaisser moved into the Communist camp.

He led sabotage raids, blowing up trains and bridges, factories and shipments to France. Within a few months he was known as the Red General of the Ruhr. He fought Government troops and police with equal success. His notoriety grew when the Weimar Republic arrested him and he escaped to Moscow. Stalin rewarded his best fighter in the Ruhr and sent him to a Soviet military academy.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Zaisser was parachuted into Germany to organize a network of Soviet industrial espionage. This was made up of an underground radio system and sabotage units which would help Russia to destroy Nazi industries in case of war.

He admitted later that his presence would not have been possible without faked papers, and without a brand new personality. All this was done so remarkably well that he was able to join the Himmler Gestapo and was soon advanced to assistant police chief.

Later Zaisser said it was fun to organize Nazi counter-espionage in industrial areas and travel on railroad cars reserved for the Gestapo and high officers.

"No one ever dared to question my loyalty to the Nazi cause. I gave them my stare. I shouted at them and gave my 'Heil Hitler' and they were scared of me."

Zaisser even admitted: "I could have killed Hitler if I had wanted to." But he was given no such orders, for this was the time when Hitler and Stalin were preparing friendship pacts.

When the Spanish Civil War began, Zaisser was transferred to Spain, where he commanded the XIIIth Brigade of the Loyalist Army as "General Gomez." He advanced within a few months to

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Chief of Staff of all International Brigades. It was he who then gave the orders to seize all American passports from American volunteers.

His task in Spain was not only to fight General Franco but to behead the Spanish democratic Government and give it Communist leadership. To achieve this goal he had to execute hundreds of non-Communist officers in the Spanish Army.

But too much was at stake for Stalin. He did not want war with Hitler in those days. The German-Russian friendship pact was to be prepared. General Gomez received orders to leave Spain before the fall of Madrid.

Fellow Communists were upset when the Nazi-Communist pact was concluded, but this was what Zaisser had always asked for—an alliance between Germany and Russia.

When Hitler broke the agreement, General Zaisser was put in charge of all camps of Nazi officers who were prisoners of war.

The Russians opened anti-Fascist indoctrination schools to win Nazis over to Communism, but Zaisser did not want to be bothered with this kind of work. He met the high-ranking officers only, the German generals and the staff officers. They were brought to the Academy of Krasnogorsk and enjoyed every liberty. Zaisser, who had the German and Russian equivalent of a Sandhurst education, spent months with the Nazi staff officers and told them of the plan for a German-Russian alliance to defeat the "arch-enemies" France, Britain, and, above all, America.

"Did not Germany," he would say, "win every war in her history when Russia was our ally? Napoleon was defeated that way. Bismarck won because Russia did not fight Germany and we had not to face a two-front war."

They listened. Here was a Prussian officer who spoke their language. A German-Russian alliance—that made sense. Germany could always manage the Russians somehow. It was in this manner that General Zaisser laid the foundation for the Communist Free German Movement, for Soviet Germany, for a new Red

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Prussian Army, a new Red German police and air force, and even a navy.

Much of the present East German military power was planned after Stalingrad when Zaisser converted hundreds of German officers to the idea of a new German-Russian alliance against Western democracy.

When later talks began about war crime trials and war criminals many a former Nazi officer knew he had no other choice than to accept the Russian offer. The alternative was to face trial and possible death.

The Russians still did not trust fully the newly converted German officers, but they entrusted them with police duty. Today Germany's Communist Party counts 50,000 Soviet-indoctrinated policemen and officers. Zaisser converted Prussian soldiers into Red Prussians.

After the war, Beria, Molotov, Malenkov and Stalin needed Zaisser in mapping the new Soviet German State. He did a most excellent job in the quisling fashion. For a time the eighteen millions living in Eastern Germany were Zaisser's subjects.

Russia also used Zaisser in three other capacities: (1) to protect the security of Eastern Germany; (2) to organize an espionage system in Western Germany; and (3) to dispose of the millions of Germans living in the lands which Russia and Poland had annexed—a territory of many thousands of square miles from Königsberg to Danzig to Stettin and Breslau. Zaisser was ordered to help liquidate or to resettle the areas under Russian and Polish rule. He presented a plan of genocide for all Germans who had not escaped from East Prussia, Pomerania, West Prussia and parts of Silesia.

When I was recently in Germany for the North American Newspaper Alliance, I investigated what Zaisser had done.

The 13,200 square kilometres of Soviet-annexed East Prussia now lie behind a double iron curtain. Four to five hundred thousand peasants and industrial workers from the Ukraine and central Russia were moved into this region. In the fortification

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area around Königsberg and Pillau, whole defence villages were set up, populated by 8,000 Tartars. The entire coastline from Pillau to Königsberg and all the way to Memel is now dotted with powerful fortifications and military establishments. Along the Frisches Haff seven rocket-launching stations and several radar stations were built. Between Pillau and Memel twenty forts were started. The port of Memel was transformed into a submarine base, protected by underwater nets. The steppes and wastelands of Russia have advanced into this East Prussian area. Neglect and predatory cultivation of the soil have destroyed whatever the war had left unharmed.

The Germans who had remained in the Memel region until 1947 were transported in a body to Russia. Nothing has since been heard of them.

Today Königsberg, East Prussia's capital, has approximately a thousand Germans in the entire population of the city. And even these are not all former inhabitants of the city; a good many were brought in as specialists by the Soviets after the war. The bombed and shelled residential quarters of the city have not yet been rebuilt. Russian officers and their families, and Russian civilian officials, live in the undestroyed quarters of the city. The cathedral, the opera house, the university and the castle are in ruins. The headquarters of the Soviet High Commander has been set up in the former Treasury Building. The Girls' Trade School has become the "House of the Soviet Army." The Ottokar Church is now a movie theatre.

This is what Zaisser did for Danzig:

The present population of Danzig is 185,000. Of these, 1,800 are Germans. The city, once called "the most opulent city in Prussia," has suffered great damage. Famous structures, along with hundreds of other buildings, are now ruins. Still standing are the old Chancellery and the Hohe Tor. In the centre of the city 5,000 homes for construction workers have been built. As a result of the destruction, business life has shifted to the suburbs of Oliva and Langfuhr. The port of Danzig has been united with

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that of Gdynia into one large port and construction of ocean-going vessels has started.

Zaisser did an equally efficient job in Pomerania. The coastal lands of Pomerania have a devastated look. Further Pomerania (*Hinterpommern*), which formerly possessed a flourishing agriculture, is now deserted and uncultivated to a depth of forty kilometres inland. The small ports of Stolpmuende, Kolberg and Ruegenwalde have begun to recover since 1949. The town of Stolp is being rebuilt with the aid of State subsidies. The lycée is now a police officers' training school. The Industrial High School is the cultural show-place of the town. A large wood-working factory employs 1,000 workers, including fifteen Germans. Kolberg, which was 80 per cent destroyed and has not been rebuilt, is now considered one of the key points in the Soviet system of fortifications in East Pomerania. But no Germans live there now. Between six and eight hundred Soviet scientists are said to be at work in this area, testing secret weapons. The days of Kolberg's prosperity as a spa are gone.

Stettin, which once had 320,000 German inhabitants, was largely destroyed in 1945. Today the population has dropped to 220,000, of whom 5,000 are Germans—and most of these harbour specialists. General Zaisser was particularly interested in this port. Millions of zloty have already been spent on construction there and new funds are available as needed. This city, the gateway to Berlin, is to be built into an "impregnable bulwark of Communism."

Some time ago the Polish Government published plans for an enormous reconstruction project in Stettin. Within twenty-five years the city is to become a modern metropolis of half a million people. But daily life there is dreary and bare. A trained worker earns 350 zloty a month; a suit of clothes costs 500 zloty.

East Brandenburg is the most neglected part of Polish East Germany. The eastern half of Frankfurt on Oder is now inhabited by about 15,000 Poles—and no Germans. Friedrichstrasse with its numerous stores and its up-to-date Hotel Warszawa is full of

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traffic; the other streets of the city appear dead. Here—as everywhere along the Oder and Neisse Rivers—the so-called “peace border” is mined and fortified to a depth of eight kilometres. Barbed-wire fences, guard towers, specially planted thorn hedges and booby traps are among the countless signs of the suspicion which the “democratic Pole” feels towards his “brothers” in the German Democratic Republic. But General Zaisser obeyed his orders: no Germans are left.

When the Poles occupied the East German territories, they stripped the Germans of factories, workshops, fields, houses and almost all the movable property. Life in the “liberated Western territories,” as the Poles call them, began with a relatively high standard of living, but the Russian soldiers almost immediately removed the larger objects of value—machinery, locomotives, ships, cranes and one set of tracks from every double-tracked railroad. It was Zaisser who supervised the transfer.

Zaisser, however, needed industrial Silesia. He had to show some mercy here. Upper Silesia, except for its westernmost portion, suffered virtually no destruction. Many Silesians counted on their knowledge of Polish to help them out. And in fact conditions in the cities of Upper Silesia have not changed as tremendously as they have in the other parts of East Germany. Industry is flourishing. Beuthen is to be made the cultural headquarters of Silesia. The Germans work and wait for better times to come. A pair of shoes costs from 200 to 1,000 zloty, a kilogram of butter 26 zloty, a suit 1,500 zloty. Monthly wages are between 400 and 750 zloty.

There was no mercy, however, for the Germans in Breslau. The city has become an overcrowded, middle-sized town which has, in places, a medieval quality. Of the present 300,000 inhabitants (formerly 625,000) only 2,000 are Germans. The housing shortage is frightful. Yet the university and the technical high school are flourishing. It is planned to turn Breslau into the “metropolis of Western Poland.”

Many factories are being converted into armament plants.

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The largest department store has been rebuilt and almost all large stores and businesses are now State-owned and directed.

As a result of the Soviets' intensified rearmament programme, which Zaisser helped direct, five new coal mines have been started in Upper Silesia. A foundry has been completed in Gleiwitz. At Oppeln, a coke plant, a nitrogen plant and three cement factories are being rebuilt. In Hirschberg and Gruenberg (which at present is a ghost town) a cellulose factory and a synthetic fabrics plant are to be constructed. The I. G. Farben works in Heydebreck is being expanded.

Still Zaisser and the Polish Secret Service have had plenty of trouble in Polish Germany. A large part of the Polish people are fiercely opposed to the Soviets. The secret organization of Pilsudski followers rejects the Oder-Neisse border, which will always remain a source of discord between Germany and Poland. A sabotage group called *Anin* constitutes one of the largest partisan movements in the history of the world; it extends from the Privet marshes to the Oder. All the members of this organization are waging a terribly risky, courageous struggle against Bolshevism. So did the German workers.

Thanks to General Zaisser, labour quotas in the German eastern lands rose steadily—while at the same time the standard of living went down. And even now the Poles do not feel at home in the German territories. Moreover, they are all familiar with the reply that the United States, Great Britain and France sent to the Soviet Union in response to its note on Germany: "At Potsdam it was clearly stated that final adjustment of territorial questions would remain for the peace settlement." Thus none of those concerned (including the Adenauer Government) considers the present German frontiers in the east the final ones.

The Kremlin believes the Communist colonization will last forever. But Russia can never fully conquer Germany or Poland. Not even General Zaisser could fulfil this "historic" mission.

His myth was finally buried on the streets of Berlin on June 17th, 1953, when unarmed workers stoned Soviet tanks and

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demanded the resignation of Zaisser and the Kremlin's puppet Government in Eastern Germany. It gave the occupation forces in Soviet Germany an unforgettable lesson in how an aroused population can fight a police state. Zaisser was removed but not purged.

His successor is Ernest Friedrich Wollweber, once the boss of Jan Valtin and of Gerhart Eisler, chief of the Comintern's international harbour espionage system. The Germans called Wollweber "Pfannkuchen auf Beene" (Pancakes on Legs). His official title in the Communist Government of Eastern Germany was "Under-Secretary" of the non-existent Eastern German Communist Navy.

VIII

Pelving's Mistress

IN the Wagnerian halls of the former Reich Chancellery the distant echo of an explosion still resounded like the thunder of *Götterdämmerung*. It was the bomb that had been meant to kill Adolf Hitler in the summer of 1914. For a time it indeed seemed twilight for Admiral Canaris.

The Admiral was on an inspection tour of the Balkans when the telegram arrived ordering him to report to the Wilhelmstrasse at once. It was a telegram he had come to expect of late; he feared it but he knew it was inevitable. And now at last it had come. Hitler might forgive one blunder, and even a succession of blunders in Africa, Italy or France. But this was something that could not be overlooked.

As Canaris entered the Chancellery, where the pace of life seemed quite normal despite the attempt on the Fuehrer's life, he may well have told himself that this was the most critical occasion of his career. Should Hitler's wrath be unappeased, Canaris might walk out again a condemned man. He braced himself and went into the Fuehrer's study. At first glance it is quite possible that he realized that his master, always a nervous man, was at the last notch of tension.

Exactly what passed between these two men will never be known with certainty. According to reports of neutral diplomats, Hitler said he was glad to see Canaris. He knew Canaris could be trusted; he was no yes-man like the others, no sycophant afraid of the grim truth.

Hitler was aware of the truth in its full grimness: he knew the war was lost. Only the most desperate measures could avail now, and even these would only postpone the inevitable disaster. He said he was sorry to discover that Canaris had failed him.

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Perhaps it would be best to dismiss the Admiral from his post of Chief of the Intelligence Division.

The Fuehrer had good reason to be tense. A group of German officers had just tried to kill him; the bomb had exploded close enough to wound Hitler. And Canaris, his all-powerful Chief of Intelligence, had known nothing about this festering conspiracy!

Canaris's reply was a fight for his position and his life. By his unfailing finesse in finding the right words, he regained Hitler's confidence, as he had so often done before. His explanation sounded convincing. He knew he had been remiss and should have better guarded his Fuehrer's safety. But he lacked the power to do so.

Hitler raised his eyebrows. Who had dared to hinder the Admiral? Canaris went on to explain. His domain embraced the military areas in the occupied countries but he had no power inside Germany. Heinrich Himmler, Gestapo head and new dictator of the home front, begrudged him any control within the Reich. It was Himmler and his Gestapo that had been at fault.

According to those who claim to know, Canaris did a good job of passing the buck. Hitler relented and Canaris remained in power. As a matter of fact, Canaris's excuse was quite true. The responsibility had been the Gestapo's and not that of the Military and Naval Intelligence Service, which was fully occupied in supervising German interests from the North to the South Pole.

The wily Admiral pointed out to his master that this occasion might be turned to profitable use. An official statement dismissing him from office would be of value in deceiving the enemy and putting him off guard. This, Canaris hoped, would give him the opportunity to carry out a long-cherished plan.

The Allied landings in France, Holland and Belgium had demonstrated that the people of Europe were heart and soul for the Allies. At great risk they sheltered parachutists, Allied spies and underground saboteurs. Canaris wanted to insinuate his agents into the underground movements of those countries which were still under German "protection." He would blast

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the resistance movement before it had a chance to aid the liberating armies of the Allies.

Hitler acceded to this request, and the usual "neutral sources" carried reports of the disgrace and dismissal of Canaris. But the wily Admiral was not successful in lulling the British, Russian and American Secret Services.

One need not look far to find Canaris's other motive for courting obscurity. He had hunted down countless Allied agents and had decreed death to innocent civilians in many countries, and had often sacrificed his own agents. His activities had sent thousands of sailors to their death. Now that times had changed, his intended victims might see a chance to hunt him down. And Canaris, a calm, brainy super-spy, trembled before the personal consequences of Germany's defeat. He saw that the game would soon be up. From a variety of motives, then, he had asked to be officially relieved of his office. He would like to hide away and be forgotten while the list of war criminals was being drawn up by the Allies. But it was too late for him to retire.

It became increasingly urgent for the Nazis to quell Europe's underground movements. The might of the underground had grown to fantastic proportions. It was taking only forty-eight hours for the French *Maquisards* to get a grounded British or American flier back to his base in England. In Yugoslavia a handful of guerilla fighters had liberated large parts of that country. Denmark had an efficient underground railroad that conducted escaped Allied war prisoners to neutral Sweden. From there Allied planes ferried the men to Britain, Iceland or wherever they had to go.

Admiral Canaris was determined to make the rebellious occupied countries feel his lash. How he did it can now be told in detail. Some of the actors in this story returned to describe the Admiral's tactics.

One of these was Flight Sergeant Andrew Percy, of Kansas.

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Pearcy was a first-rate tail gunner with thirty-one missions behind him. The thirty-second was "it." His plane, one of a fleet of a hundred bombers, had loosed its blockbusters upon the ball-bearing works at Erkner, a suburb of Berlin. *En route* they encountered a horde of fighters, and at Berlin the Germans put up a terrific flak barrage.

The plane was riddled, but Percy's pilot managed to fly it as far as the North Sea. Here it became clear that their only chance was to attempt an emergency landing on one of the Danish islands. That would mean long imprisonment in a Nazi camp; but there was nothing else to do.

They landed safely in a small tilled field. About ten Danes clustered around the plane almost as soon as it stopped rolling. The American slang, the swearing and the asseverations that this was "one hell of a mess" identified the fliers for the Danes. At once they cried enthusiastically: "Welcome to Denmark!"

They spoke in Danish, which none of the crew understood. But it was easy to understand the friendliness of tone and gesture. Then one of the Danes, who spoke a little English, volunteered to help the Americans. The fliers were told to hide in a nearby house. Meanwhile the Danes set fire to the Flying Fortress, to make sure the plane would be useless to the Nazis.

Andrew Percy, the tail gunner, told me how they were shuttled from farm to farm, from church to church. The Danish underground provided for all their needs. They were disguised as native fishermen, were given the best food available and were taught a smattering of Danish. Finally faked Danish birth certificates and identification papers were obtained for them. "The Germans are too dumb to know whether you boys are Danes or Americans," one of the underground fighters said to Percy. By easy stages they reached the vicinity of Copenhagen. Here they had to wait a while for the opportunity to escape the country. The process took months. Each flier had to fend for himself and followed an individual route. However, they were all to meet somewhere in neutral Sweden.

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The Nazis had a good idea why so many British and American fliers slipped through their fingers. Admiral Canaris set up a special Intelligence section to combat the Danish patriots.

Allied counter-agents got wind of the new department of the Nazi Secret Service, and learned who its "deposed" master was.

The queen of this special Nazi unit was a woman agent of great cleverness and competence. Andrew Percy was to become one of her many victims. Andrew had successfully drifted from Jutland to Copenhagen. There he was to wait for the boat that would smuggle him out of the country. All details had to be arranged with the utmost caution. To avoid risks, Percy slept in a different house every night. Even that did not altogether eliminate danger, for the Nazis frequently sprang a raid on an entire neighbourhood, checking up on the identity cards of the inhabitants. For they were well aware that Denmark was a land of scientific saboteurs whose stubborn resistance called for the sternest measures.*

These Nazi raids complicated Andrew Percy's situation. Other fliers managed to get to Sweden after a few days or a week, but the tail gunner was stalled in Denmark. If he had been caught, he would have been shot. But the Danes were wonderful hosts, and, apart from the danger, Andrew enjoyed his underground existence. One of the most cordial protectors was a stunning, tall girl named Helvig Delbo, who reminded him of one of the girls he knew back home in Kansas. She was blonde, glamorous, intelligent and always vivacious and refreshing. Andrew saw her quite often, though the rules of the underground expressly forbade frequent contacts with any one person.

Helvig was the proprietor of a dressmaker's shop that specialized in alterations. It was a little place, but did tasteful work. And it had a good location in the centre of Copenhagen—30 Sankelmarksgade. That made it more foolhardy than audacious for Percy to visit her there during daylight. But he imagined that

* Denmark holds the world's record for sabotaging; an act of sabotage was committed every eight hours.

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his Danish was by now good enough to pass muster with the Nazis, who themselves knew little of the language. Evenings he would visit her in her pleasant, two-room apartment. Of course, this was another infraction of the rules.

Helvig was considerably older than Andrew—the flier was only twenty-four. But, lost in a foreign country and surrounded by perils, Andrew was eager to grasp at life. This is why he plunged into a romance with this woman of thirty-six.

Her charming apartment held all sorts of piquant secrets. Helvig Delbo kept pictures of President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, of Marshal Stalin and General Eisenhower. Here, in an occupied country, she had hidden an American flag. When she archly showed it to him, Andrew felt close to tears. The pictures and the flag were dangerous indeed. Discovery of these trophies would have cost the girl at least ten years' imprisonment. And, as the final pitch of madness, the two of them listened in to the London and Moscow broadcasts.

Helvig was a gallant Danish patriot, active in helping the saboteurs. She told him that by birth she was really Norwegian. She had escaped from Quisling Norway, and here the police believed her to be an ordinary Danish woman without the slightest interest in politics. Clearly the two of them, as fugitives, had a great deal in common.

Helvig asked Andrew many questions about America, and among other things she was curious about was how he had been rescued, who had helped him and who was arranging about the boat to Sweden. Flight Sergeant Percy did not know many names. As a foreigner he found the Danish names difficult to remember and pronounce. The only names he recalled were Larsen and Andersen—and numerous people in the country had such names. Helvig never pressed him; she always quickly changed the subject.

Finally the day came when all was ready for Andrew's departure. He spent his last night with Helvig. They were grateful for the time, short as it was, in which they had known each other, and

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they promised to meet again after the war. Then the hour struck for the heartbreaking farewell.

Andrew Percy, wearing ordinary civilian clothes, made his way to neutral Sweden. A few weeks later he was safely in England. There he told the Allied Intelligence Services all the details of his escape. Of course, he inquired about the other members of his crew.

But none of the others had been rescued. They had been taken prisoner, and it was a matter of great astonishment that Andrew had escaped. A Danish Nazi newspaper reported the arrest of the fugitives, and with them twelve members of the underground.

The Allied Intelligence Services began putting two and two together. What was behind Andrew's unique escape? Could he have been permitted to escape in order that his route might be traced? Was Helvig, his generous hostess, a bona fide member of the underground? No underground worker would risk his freedom to have at home pictures of Allied leaders; his life was too valuable to the movement. It was not worthy of a member to risk a stiff prison sentence for himself and to endanger the lives of his comrades, just for the pleasure of keeping a forbidden American flag.

The British and Americans decided to investigate the case of Helvig Delbo.

Intelligence officers visited Kingston House in London, headquarters of the Norwegian Government-in-exile. One door in this building bears the legend: Department of Justice of the Norwegian Government. The British and American officers asked whether the Norwegians had any data on a Norwegian citizen named Helvig Delbo. Delbo? No, they had nothing on her, but the Norwegian officials promised to follow up the matter. "Underground boats" had been keeping up uninterrupted communication between England and Norway since April 1940. By way of these boats an urgent inquiry was passed to the underground within Norway.

Underground Norway had its technique for finding out what

Pelving's Mistress

it wanted to know. Not everyone in Quisling's Department of Justice or police force was heart and soul for Major Vidkun Quisling. Norwegian Intelligence officers who wore the uniform of the *Hird*, Quisling's storm troopers, gathered some information. They had nothing definite, but they made an excellent start.

Their report named a certain Max Pelving as liaison officer between the Quisling police in Norway and the Nazi police in Denmark. Pelving is the same Danish police official who had been arrested in 1919 as an accomplice of the Pflugk-Hartung spy ring. He had recently been seen in Oslo at the Hotel Continental, where he had taken part in conferences between the Norwegian Gestapo and the Quisling police.

With him was a tall woman in her mid-thirties. Her name was Greta Johannsen, but the description answered to that of Helvig Delbo.

Max Pelving, alias Petermann, who had done his treacherous work for Pflugk-Hartung and Canaris before the invasion of Denmark, was active again. It was a highly tenable premise that Pelving was certain to be involved in constructing a trap for American fliers and their underground friends.

A Norwegian counter-agent had seen the two, Pelving and the woman, at the Theatre Café. The lead was worth checking. The Norwegian agent got further orders from London.

He was to proceed to Copenhagen and find out what more he could.

Ordinarily such a trip was impossible. But a member of the Quisling police and a wearer of the Nazi uniform has special prerogatives. After a few weeks he reported to London that Greta Johannsen and Helvig Delbo were one and the same person.

This had more than one implication. First, it established that Helvig Delbo had worked for the Nazi Secret Service for years. She was a star member of Admiral Canaris's special Intelligence unit. But most important of all was the discovery that Max Pelving had resumed activity. He did not have, it seemed, enough deaths on his conscience. He was serving the now-

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entrenched Nazis as he had served them before the invasion of Scandinavia.

Helvig Delbo was something more than his girl friend. His first wife had tried to poison herself when her husband's arrest as a Nazi spy took place. She did not die, but was ill for many months. When she recovered, Pelving brutally deserted her, and chose Helvig as her successor. But the pair were never legally married.

Pelving's espionage trial in 1919 had resulted in a sentence of two and a half years. The District Attorney revealed that the spy's father had been a German and that his real name was Petermann. Pelving had entered the Danish Civil Service by means of false statements. He had fought in Finland's war against Russia and had been presented with several medals by Marshal Mannerheim. For a long time he had been a member of the illicit Danish Nazi Party.

These facts established, the underground was immediately warned. Parachutists brought news that Pelving and Delbo were working inside the underground. The arrest of American fliers and the death of many Danish patriots could be attributed to them.

The people of Denmark act straightforwardly. There is but one punishment for double-crossing. In December 1913 Pelving felt his position so secure that he could be driven by his chauffeur through Copenhagen in a German *Dienst-Auto*, an official car. Beside him sat Denmark's Mata Hari. Quite recently five Danish patriots she had exposed had been shot for aiding the Americans.

The Danish saboteurs were far from being murderers. However, punishment is sometimes necessary. Let us call them, rather, guerilla fighters in their secret war. Max and Helvig were driving down one of the boulevards of Copenhagen when, from another car alongside theirs, three shots were fired. Max Pelving was killed and the charming Helvig wounded.

The Nazis were furious and retaliated by taking hostages. But all Denmark rejoiced to learn that the lowest of the spies and traitors had met a fitting end.

Pelving's Mistress

Helvig Delbo was rushed to a German army hospital, since she was afraid to go to an ordinary civilian one. She recovered and in January 1944 she fled to Norway, where she worked for the Norwegian Gestapo. She did some private work for no less a personage than Quisling himself. In February 1944 Quisling dispatched her to Sweden on a fake passport. There her task was to observe what the Norwegian refugees were up to, and to see what kind of goods the Norwegian Government-in-exile was ordering and having stored in Sweden. She was also authorized to set up a working group of five trustworthy people.

The efficient Swedish police found out about it. They arrested the five who were working for her, but Helvig herself slipped through the net.

The underground in Norway and Denmark were looking for her. The Allied Secret Services were on the alert. But she seemed to have vanished. A rumour came that she was in contact with Max Pelving's former chief, Pflugk-Hartung, then the head of Nazi espionage in Rumania.

Helvig had never done what she did out of principle. She performed her spy's duties because she was in love with Pelving, because she liked adventure and because it meant easy money. Her motives were quite commercial, and in the end it was her love of money that brought about her downfall.

She must have known that she was being hunted by everyone in Scandinavia. Nevertheless, she hated to leave for Germany or Rumania without making one little expedition to Copenhagen to get at Pelving's old safe deposit box. It had money and jewellery in it, the equivalent of the thirty pieces of silver that Judas received. The pair had not saved a fabulous sum out of the cash they had received for sending Danish patriots to the firing-squad or the gallows. The safe deposit box held some trinkets and about twelve thousand kroner, or about £1,000.

It was obvious that she intended to stay in Copenhagen no longer than was necessary but Denmark is a country that knows how to destroy its deadly enemies. Five hours after Helvig entered

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Copenhagen, the underground knew where she was and the Allied Secret Services received the message by short wave.

Next morning every Danish newspaper carried a three-line notice to the effect that unknown attackers had shot down a certain Helvig Delbo, a Norwegian citizen. It happened near the Sankelmarksgade, where she had had her innocent little dress-maker's shop.

Her life had had no beauty, no real romance. It is enough to say that with Pelving she was one of the most dangerous spies of World War II, and received her just deserts at the hands of soldiers of the Allied armies.

Her funeral, held on March 13th, 1944, was attended by no one. But she was accorded one last courtesy. She was buried at the side of Max Petermann-Pelving.

A Beautiful "Pacifist"

Gestapo. But look at me—I've gone and fallen in love with a woman I suspect may be a Nazi, and a Nazi spy to boot. I have to put a stop to it. And I want you to tell me—is she or isn't she a spy? I think she is. If I'm right, you must help me get her arrested."

He paused and gazed moodily out the window, his lips set. Then he resumed:

"I think she is a spy, but there is no way to prove it. I can't, just on bare suspicion, set the police on her trail. I am powerless, but the more I see of her, the more I am convinced. And I've seen a great deal of Greta Kainen; I've seen her at least three times a week. Every time fear and disgust are mingled with worship. My heart pumps madly when I talk to her. It takes all my self-control to act like a normal, unhysterical human being. I've resolved again and again to stop seeing her, but now I think that I must go on meeting her till I find out the truth.

"I can't seem to break with this woman. And yet she is far from young. She is easily over forty, though still beautiful, with that tall blonde stateliness and elegant intellectual manner that is characteristic of many of our Swedish women. Yet she is not typical at all. She possesses a unique glamour that I find irresistible.

"I had made up my mind never to give her any information she might ask for and to expose her if ever I felt my suspicions warranted it. No, she would get nothing out of me.

"But I can never carry out my intentions. Her conversational technique is magnificent. Carelessly she will recount insignificant but interesting stories of the diplomatic underworld, and then, in connection with her stories, she will naively ask a harmless question. And I answer it—answer it, and a moment later I want to beat my head against the wall.

"For somehow I find that I have been giving her information about persons or things that might interest one of the Axis Secret Services. At first I thought it was chance. But it happened too often. She knew precisely when to stop, and never asked too many questions. And a moment afterward she would become wholly feminine and melting. Her eyes would soften with

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melancholy and she would tell me about her unhappy married life with her Finnish husband, Veino.

"She has a wonderful way of talking about her personal life, so wonderful that I sometimes am overcome with self-contempt. What a cad I am, suspecting such a frank, good-hearted woman of meddling in the filthy trade of espionage!

"It can't go on, and I know it. She is older than I, and she is too much for me. It is a rather sad blow to my ego. I always thought I could master such situations. But not this one.

"The climax came at Christmas time, and you know Christmas in snow-covered Stockholm; it's a romantic time of year. The Kungsgatan and the Regeringsgatan were gaily decked with flags and streamers; Christmas trees with their cheerful coloured lights glittered everywhere. Together, Greta and I made our way down the narrow streets of the Old City to the Christmas Fair. It was all so beautiful, so confusing. Three months with Greta had brought me to my wits' end; I could not think clearly. I cast my doubts away.

"We crossed the bridge to the Zoo, to Skansen. The festival spirit, dancing, mulled wine, the old Swedish folk songs and the entrancing candlelight impelled me towards the climax of my relationship with Greta. I kissed her. And then we left the Gösta Berling Restaurant. I had to get out into the cold Arctic night, to clear my head. We left Skansen, walked through the deep snow along Mälär Lake. There was no one in sight; it was as though all the lake were ours alone. I kissed her again, and then I told her how unjust I had been to her. I tried to explain.

" 'Imagine,' I said, 'I've been suspecting you—oh, how foolishly—of being a spy.'

"She was wonderful. Her eyes filled with tears, but then she laughed and laughed.

" 'You never really believed it seriously, did you?'

" 'Oh, yes, I was absolutely convinced.'

" 'And yet you went on seeing me. You still liked me.'

" 'Yes, I didn't care,' I said, and my voice sounded strange to me.

A Beautiful "Pacifist"

'Life is short. My life has been spoiled by politics. I've had enough of it; I don't want anything more to do with it.'

"To this day I can't make up my mind whether I meant it, or whether I instinctively said what Greta wanted to hear. At any rate, I went on to tell her that there was now a bond between us that would be lasting. I was enough of an idealist, I said, to prize true friendship, because I had learned how rare a thing it was."

In words similar to these he made his confession. The man was looking for sympathy. My newspaper training asserted itself and I shook my head. I said that the love angle was his own affair, but that I was surprised to find he had fallen so easily into an enemy's trap. It was just like an idealist, I added, to be taken in by such elementary methods.

In a matter-of-fact way I recommended that Nils go for a week's skiing to Åre in Jämtland. I felt sure that the week would bring him to his senses and help him shake off his infatuation. Meanwhile I would try my wits on the espionage riddle.

Sometimes a week of snow and sunshine will transform both body and mind. Nils got over his infatuation. But two events contributed greatly to the cure. One was Greta's announcement that she was going to join the Swedish peace movement. The other was the result of an investigation.

Before Nils left for Åre I followed my instincts and asked a friend who worked on *Dagens Nyheter*, the great Swedish liberal newspaper, to find out about Greta's past.

I knew a little about her past, but my friend found out a great deal more. Her maiden name was Greta Anna Bolander. She had served as a nurse in World War I and had married a German army officer who was killed after they had been wed a year. Until 1927 she lived in Germany. Then she returned to Sweden, her birthplace, where she met her present husband whom she had not yet divorced, although their marriage was reputedly very unhappy. Veino Kainen was a Finnish shipowner.

Greta had also written a book—this was the first I had heard of it. It was an attack upon the French Army of Occupation in

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the Rhineland; apparently Greta was chiefly concerned with the Negro French soldiers, who had allegedly assaulted German girls.

I felt that I was on the track of something. Nils' unwilling suspicions might possibly be right and this woman might be playing a curious game. But what could she possibly want of Nils? Why was she cultivating his friendship? The riddle was solved sooner than I expected.

Greta lived in the Grand Hotel in Stockholm, which, as the war advanced, became the city's great spy nest. She could afford it; her husband was a rich man and was generous with his money, despite their lack of marital harmony. Nils went to see her there when he returned from the skiing trip.

She suspected no change in him. She greeted him warmly, embraced him and made Nils tell her all about the skiing. Then she produced her surprise.

"I've given twenty thousand kroner to the Swedish Peace Society. And, imagine, they've made me an honorary member of the executive committee and want to send me on a lecture tour through Sweden, Norway and Finland!"

A gift of twenty thousand kroner to the Swedish Peace Society was quite an act of generosity, especially from a former nurse.

"That's wonderful," Nils said without conviction.

"Don't you like it?" she asked anxiously.

"Oh, yes, of course."

Reassured, she began to tell him about her plans.

War was on, she said. It was the duty of everyone to work for peace. The peace movements in all countries must work hard to stop war.

"In Germany, too," Nils said.

She gave him a look of dismay, but at once recovered her composure.

"Of course, in Germany, too."

She actually believed Nils naïve enough to credit her—as though he did not know that all anti-militaristic organizations in Germany had long since been destroyed by Hitler.

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She went on to speak of her other plans and all at once Nils realized what she wanted him for. He realized, too, that he personally meant nothing to this woman, that their affair was a trick and that she merely intended to use him.

"You're a member of the Refugee Committee," she said. "It is you who decides whether or not a person is to be recognized as a refugee. You have helped a great many of these unfortunate, homeless people. And all of them want work and are against the Nazis." She went on to expound her diabolical plan.

All the refugees needed money, that was clear. The Peace Society would give it to them. In return, all the refugees had to do was to furnish details of people they knew in Germany who were anti-Nazi, people who were members of the German underground. Then anti-war literature would be smuggled to them, and they would be able to distribute it all over the country. The distributors in Germany would, in turn, report everything they knew about German preparations for war, German rearmament and German fortifications, and the Peace Society would publish the information. In that way it could strike a great blow at German militarism.

The plan was clever. It sounded almost convincing. If Greta were a British spy, the idea would make sense. But if she were a Nazi agent—and Nils was quite certain that she was not working for the British—it was deadly. It could be a brilliant way for the Nazis to trap the whole underground movement. But it was still not entirely clear. We would have to learn more. For a time I had the wild idea that Greta was capable of working for both sides.

I advised Nils on the next step. He was to promise to help her, but he was to say that he must first get the consent of the other members of the committee. She made him promise that he would try hard to convince the others.

Greta did not know that from 1934 to the outbreak of the war Nils had been associated with me in the smuggling of propaganda literature into Germany. Or perhaps she did know and wanted to get the names of the courier and liaison men from Nils. She

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simulated love, of course, in order to have him trust her completely. And her game had nearly worked.

However, we were not entirely sure of what she was up to. Still, we had an idea. We went to see my friend—let us call him Stig Anderson—an agent of the British Secret Service. He was Swedish-born, but his mother was English, and I knew he was strongly sympathetic to the British. He would deny that he worked for the British Secret Service—he was duty-bound to deny it—but in any case I knew that he could help me and that ultimately London would find Greta an interesting problem.

Stig listened attentively to our tale. He took notes and warned us to be cautious. He promised to have information for us within a week or so; meanwhile I must not publish a word about the affair until he gave me permission. Nils and I agreed.

Greta was a busy woman. She told Nils she had to go to Helsinki to discuss financial affairs with her husband and perhaps initiate divorce proceedings. As she said this, she looked archly at Nils. Meanwhile he was to do his part on the Refugee Committee and they would be ready to begin work in two weeks. Nils offered to get a few articles and publicity releases about the new peace campaign into the newspapers. We were leading her on until we could get some real evidence against her.

In the meantime I talked with the editor of my newspaper about the case and was given the assignment to investigate the activities of the mysterious Greta. Our private detective work, then, would have some backing. I was hoping for some startling developments. However, since Nils and I had promised Stig to publish nothing until the whole case was broken, all I could do for the present was gather information.

I flew to Helsinki and investigated the activities of Mr. and Mrs. Veino Kainen. The first thing I learned was that Mrs. Kainen was not in Helsinki at all. She had been lying. Then I found out that Mr. Kainen was the manager of a German-Finnish shipping line which was recommended in the highest terms by the German Travel Bureau.

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This information convinced me that Greta was quite as dangerous as we suspected. I hurried back to Stockholm, feeling somehow that my presence there might avert some great disaster. In Stockholm I went directly to the chief of police. I told him all I knew and all that Greta planned—though I did not say a word about Nils or Stig, my Swedish-English friend.

Chief of Police Torsten Söderström promised to set men to work on the case and keep me informed of all developments.

Things began to move rapidly. The British Secret Service, the Swedish Alien Squad and, as I learned later, the Russian Secret Service, also, pursued beautiful Greta. And I, an ordinary newspaper man who had become involved in this plot, tried to lead the pursuit. From then on, Greta's every step was watched.

It seemed that she had spent two weeks in Berlin at the home of no less a host than Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels. That was why she could not be found at Helsinki. But she must have had a confederate in Helsinki, since Nils had received some love letters of hers postmarked in Finland. Mr. Söderström, the Swedish chief of police, passed on the information that she had once been given an audience by Mussolini. Thus there was plenty of evidence against Greta. But so far she had done nothing that was against the law of democratic Sweden.

In February 1940 she returned to Stockholm. Apparently she suspected nothing. Shortly after her return she set out on her lecture tour, to speak against militarism. She addressed some fifty meetings and played the part of a sincere pacifist. But in the question period that followed each lecture, Nazi Germany somehow emerged as a shining light on the road to peace. She always cited Hitler's many assurances that all he wanted was peace.

The Peace Society purchased newspapers and printed pamphlets; Swedish parliamentary deputies who were members of the Society suddenly came out in defence of the cession of the Sudetenland and Danzig to Germany. They argued that Germany had a natural claim on Danzig and the Polish Corridor.

It was quite obvious that the Nazis were spending huge sums

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of money to organize peace demonstrations. And, of course, the peace organization was sabotaging the rearmament programmes of the various Scandinavian Governments. Yet no one suspected who was behind this campaign to undermine the anti-Nazi forces in the Nordic countries. These "pacifists" joined with the sincere religious groups, with Socialists and Communists, with Prohibitionists and the liberal Press, to preach that the small democratic nations must rally to the idea of peace.

Greta sent delegates to peace conferences in Britain, Switzerland, Holland and the United States. And everyone, friend and foe, respected her as a talented and energetic woman. We and a few others knew that she was skating on thin ice. Finally arrived the day when Nils and I could go ahead.

I arranged a meeting between Greta and a man who was willing to sell her for one thousand kroner the following information:

Reports on German secret rearmament.

Names of two underground workers in Germany.

Photographs of fortifications in Northern Norway.

Our accomplice was a refugee posing as a newcomer from Germany to Norway, who was supposed to be lacking a permit to stay and was now desperately in need of money.

He played his part very well, telling her a long and convincing story about himself; how he had escaped from Germany, where he had worked with the underground and where he had friends in German war plants. He offered himself as just the man we needed in our fight for "peace."

He deliberately spoke an illiterate German with a heavy Berlin accent. The unsuspecting Greta was easily fooled.

Not dreaming that the information was worthless, she bought it. An hour later she was arrested by the Swedish police.

In prison she continued to act the lady, though no longer so graciously. She maintained that she was a sincere pacifist who believed that all Europe should surrender to Germany without war, since Britain and France were degenerate nations. She confessed that she knew Mussolini, Goebbels, Goering and even

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Hitler personally. Nevertheless, she indignantly denied that she had been working for the Nazis. Everything she had performed had been done out of her own feeling for what was right, she vehemently insisted.

To their dismay, the Swedish police could find no evidence that Greta had spied against Sweden. Since she was a Finnish citizen by marriage, all they could do was to deport her. A piquant note in the affair was the attempt of Countess Fanny von Willamowitz-Moellendorf, the sister-in-law of Hermann Goering, to intervene in behalf of the Finnish-German spy. That Goering's sister-in-law pleaded Greta's innocence certainly did not help Greta's case.

I got a front-page beat, but Nils was hardly elated about how things had turned out. You can't be happy when you have to employ the kind of methods we had used. Besides, even though Nils had recovered from his infatuation, Greta remained for him an extraordinarily attractive woman.

I still believe that pacifism is a great and vital idea and that anti-militarism ought to be the major subject taught in every school. But I have found out, as have many others, that all movements must beware of the company they keep. The Nazis had insinuated men into the European peace movement and used it to prevent rearmament and to prolong the defenceless state of the democratic countries. The moving spirit behind Nazi-organized pacifism was Greta Kainen.

Later, when the Finnish-Russian war began, both the Kainens—whose marriage no longer seemed an unhappy one—became very active. They organized harbour espionage in various northern ports. Veino Kainen's camouflage as a shipowner was very helpful in this work.

It was, of course, Greta Kainen who short-waved Berlin when the courier plane with the armistice documents was leaving Stockholm's airport. It was then that many Swedish newspapers asked for an investigation and finally the country's airports were protected and the fields closed to non-passengers and "tourists."

XI

Margin for Error

IN October 1911, a few months after Hitler invaded Russia, Greta Kainen gave a cocktail party in Helsinki. A strange assortment of guests filled her splendidly appointed Helsinki home. As was usual at her parties, a number of pacifists were present. In addition, there were some German officials in civilian dress, some well-known Finnish Nazis, some poets and newspaper men—and Professor Friedrich Wilhelm Borgmann, Chief of the German Travel Bureau in Finland. It was a very gay party; everyone danced, drank and retailed the gossip of Scandinavian society.

Among the newspaper men was a German named Friedrich Ege, a prominent member of the foreign correspondents corps in Finland and one of Greta's favourites. It was consistent with her queenly manner that Greta always had favourites, usually a good many at the same time.

I knew Ege and despised him because he was a Nazi. Unquestionably he was a German spy; official investigations had proved that beyond a doubt.

I had often met him. Like myself, he was a member of the Foreign Press Association, for in Sweden both democratic and Fascist correspondents were members of this association. Even the Japanese came to the meetings. As for Ege, even before he made the acquaintance of Greta Kainen I had disliked him.

It was in April 1913 that this tall, blond German, who resembled many other tall, blond Germans, crossed the Swedish border. He appeared to be in his mid-thirties. He was accompanied by his wife, a dyed-in-the-wool Berliner who spoke German with a frightful Berlin accent. The couple carried a large amount of baggage. They explained to the Swedish authorities that they

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were German political refugees who had been forced to leave Germany, having been warned by friends that they would soon be arrested.

The Swedish police examined the case thoroughly, with Mr. Söderström conducting the hearings. Ege was given tentative permission to remain.

The Eges had quite a bit of money and behaved like sincere anti-Nazis. Refugees who were worse off than they were welcomed in their home and often given money. Despite this generosity, Ege was not well liked. An exiled German university professor told me that Ege had invited him to dinner and had kept slapping him jovially on the back and saying: "Come on, eat your fill for a change, my friend." Unquestionably Ege was not a man of very delicate feelings. Still, there are worse failings, and one does not damn a man for lack of tact.

Ege did not work. He spent his time studying Swedish intensively, attending refugee meetings and organizing anti-Nazi propaganda. Like all other refugees he had been cast adrift; the only difference was that he had money. Presumably the money went fairly fast, for during his first seven months he earned only small sums from the sale of an occasional article to some newspaper. Certainly he could not have lived on the proceeds of this work.

Then the refugee society in Sweden experienced a shock. Friedrich Ege got a job, and a well-paid job at that. He became general manager of a publishing house—not a Swedish but a German publishing house. Ege accepted the position of director of the Scandinavian branch of the world-famous Reklam publishing house of Leipzig.

The people who knew Ege were scandalized. Ege working for the Nazis—it was a disgrace! He was cut by his acquaintances, denounced to the police and accused of a hundred crimes he could not possibly have committed. All who had associated with him roundly abused him in order to clear themselves of any suspicion. A good many persons were highly embarrassed.

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Ege tried to explain to his former friends that it was purely a case of "business is business." He was not a Nazi agent, he protested; he had taken the job solely because he had to support his wife and himself. But the Chief of the Swedish Police, Torsten W. Söderström, would not accept this explanation. He called Ege and his wife to a hearing at which no punches were pulled. The Eges had a rather hard time of it. Söderström presented evidence that Frau Ege's father was a Gestapo officer in Berlin; was, in fact, one of the more important Nazi officials.

Ege continued to protest that he was not a Nazi. To this Söderström replied: "You may or may not be a Nazi. But you sought asylum in this country as a refugee and now you are working for a Nazi publisher. Refugees don't collaborate with the Nazis. Perhaps you are innocent, but the Swedish police intend to take no chances with you."

The chief of police did not issue a warrant but ordered Ege to leave Sweden within a week, and gave him permission to go to some other country if he did not care to return to Germany.

The Eges moved. The furniture and trunks that they had brought from Berlin were packed and shipped. To the few friends who came to bid him good-bye, Ege poured out bitter complaint and repeated again and again that he was not a Nazi. "The Nazis are murderous gangsters," he declared. A few believed him and were convinced that he was suffering a grave injustice. I sided with the majority who felt that an anti-Nazi simply did not accept a job with a Nazi firm. At the last meeting of the Foreign Press Association, when he bade me and his other colleagues good-bye, my opinion was momentarily shaken. He assured us with such sincerity that some day we would all find out he was not a Nazi and I almost believed him. Within a week or two, however, my doubts disappeared.

They had to disappear. For the German Press used Ege's expulsion from Sweden as a pretext for a political campaign against the Swedish Government and against King Gustaf. Overnight Ege became a martyr who had sacrificed his career

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solely because he worked for the Nazis. And Ege went to Finland where he gave up his pretence completely. All the newspapers in Germany hailed him as a hero, and shortly after his arrival in Finland he became editor-in-chief of the Nazi colony's newspaper, *The German in Finland*.

The entire Scandinavian Press now recognized Ege as one of the Nazi fifth columnists in the Northland. He held a prominent place on every list of Nazi propagandists, and those who knew him were satisfied that the country was rid of a dangerous man. In more than one article I quoted Swedish newspaper comments on Friedrich Ege, the Nazi spy. After his deportation investigators established that he also worked for the Nordic Society, the most prominent German espionage organization. This society, whose honorary chairman was Heinrich Himmler, had been established ostensibly "to maintain cultural relations with the Nordic peoples." The Nordic Society had branches in every German port and in all the important cities of Scandinavia. After the occupation of Denmark and Norway, officials of the Nordic Society were appointed "administrators" in those countries.

One day in 1941 a high Nazi official visited Ege in his apartment in Helsinki. He was a tall, blue-eyed Teuton named Vitalis Pantenburg. Pantenburg was one of the heads of the Nordic Society and was also connected with the Scandinavian section of the German Secret Service. Pantenburg was the man who bribed Olaf Sundlo, the commander of the Norwegian fortress at Narvik, to furlough his troops and officers while the Germans made their invasion of Norway. (This episode is one of the sources of John Steinbeck's *The Moon is Down*.)

Pantenburg commissioned Ege to help him fight Russian counter-espionage in Scandinavia. For, alas, from the Nazi standpoint, the OGPU knew all about Nazi secret military concentrations in Finland, Nazi espionage in Karelia and German-manned fortifications on the Russo-Finnish border.

Thus Ege became Pantenburg's assistant. He was assigned a woman collaborator known as Number 25. Pantenburg informed

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Ege that Number 25 would report to him and that she would take care of transmitting his information to Germany.

Anyone who saw Greta Kainen, alias Number 25, with Friedrich Ege would inevitably have assumed a love affair between the two. Few knew that it was Greta who placed Ege's information into diplomatic pouches destined for Berlin. And Ege supplied excellent information. He prepared reports on construction in Murmansk, on Russian activities in the Kola Peninsula, on the Communist Parties in Scandinavia. His employers were so pleased with him that he received two successive raises in salary within a short time. The Nazi Secret Service obviously considered him one of its best men and was convinced that his information was almost always accurate. Before long five sub-agents were working under Ege. He had woven a tight and highly efficient espionage network. Both the Finns and the Nazis were able to make important arrests as a result of his information. . . .

In 1942 there could no longer be any doubt about Ege. The Swedish Press referred to him constantly as a "viper in the bosom of Scandinavia," as one of the most dangerous spies and *agents provocateurs* in the northern countries. But the Finns refused to deport him; he had given them too much valuable information about the Russians. Few knew so much about the activities of the Communist International as Friedrich Ege.

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Meanwhile I had left Sweden and Norway, had gone to America and had almost forgotten Ege's name and the nightmare of the Nazi agents in Scandinavia. One day, while I was reading *The New York Times* during the morning rush hour in a New York subway, my heart skipped a beat. With growing excitement and astonishment I read the following item in the *Times* of June 7th, 1943:

GESTAPO KILL JOURNALIST

Stockholm, Sweden, Monday, June 7 (U.P.)—Reliable advice from Helsinki said today that the German

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Gestapo has executed Friedrich Ege, German journalist who was arrested by Finnish authorities recently for espionage. These advices said Herr Ege was handed over to the Gestapo and taken to Estonia, where the execution occurred. Herr Ege, a prominent member of the foreign correspondents corps in Helsinki, had been accused of transmitting information to Russia.

So Ege had been right after all when he spoke those prophetic words at his leavetaking in Stockholm: "Some day you will find out that I am not a Nazi"! But now it was too late. How tragicomical it is that hundreds of articles were printed accusing Ege of being a Nazi spy and characterizing him as loathsome scum!

How tragic, indeed, must such a life be! Undoubtedly Ege had done more for the United Nations than all his defamers. All who had hurt him would gladly now have made amends, but it was too late. What, I asked, had become of my journalistic instinct, my nose for news? There was no comfort in knowing that hundreds of other newspaper men had printed the same distorted reports about him that I had. Yet the deception was a necessary one; had we believed in his truthfulness, he would not have been able to do his work.

I began delving into the case again. I interviewed a Finnish diplomat in Washington who gave me to understand that this latest report might also be false. Possibly Ege was still alive, he hinted. But I could get nothing definite out of him. From Stockholm, however, I got more detailed information.

The Germans claimed that Ege had passed on to the Nazis reports prepared for him by the OGPU. He had been working for the Russians for years. He had helped to conceal Russian parachutists who landed in Finland, had supplied the Russians with figures on Nazi troop concentrations in the Baltic and on the German "Ostsee" fleet and above all had been able to tell the Russians exactly what facts the Nazis wanted to learn about

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Soviet Russia. Knowing what the Germans wanted to find out helped the Russians guess what the Germans were planning.

Ege also reported to the Russians on American arms shipments to Finland during the first Russo-Finnish War, and on the shipments that were organized by Axel Wenner-Gren, the Swedish cannon king, the self-same Wenner-Gren, who later lived in Mexico and was placed on the American and British black lists. . . .

Ege's arrest was due to one of those ironical turns of fortune so frequent in the history of our times. Apparently the contempt of all decent men became unbearable to him. One day he told a Swedish pacifist that he was really against the war and that, fundamentally, he hated the Nazis. The pacifist was convinced by the sincerity of his manner, and passed the story on, not dreaming that all the pacifist organizations of Europe were swarming with Nazi agents. Thus it came to the ears of the former executive of the Swedish Peace Society, Greta Kainen. Her suspicions were aroused, for there seemed no longer any reason for Ege to continue to protest that he was not a Nazi. She sent a report to Friedrich Wilhelm Borgmann, head of the Nazi Travel Bureau, and from then on Ege was watched closely.

But the Nazi Secret Service in Finland, which Borgmann headed, could find nothing against him. Nevertheless, they kept Ege on the list of suspected agents. Again and again they searched his apartment, his car, his clothes, but found nothing. Then, one day, they saw him in the company of a well-known woman, a famous Finnish playwright. She, in turn, was kept under surveillance, and finally a Russian parachutist was caught in her house. There the Nazi agents also found parts of a radio transmitter which according to Nazi reports bore Ege's fingerprints.

Eventually they found the transmitter itself, which the playwright kept well concealed in her home. It was this transmitter which Ege could have used to send reports to Russia and to receive orders from the OGPU chief, Laurenti Beria. The Nazi account

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of Ege's fate appeared only too true. The fate of the playwright is now known. She was arrested and sentenced to death, but later the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, and she was finally freed by the Russians in 1945.

According to the same Swedish sources, the German Secret Service had proof that a code radio message informed the OGPU that an ammunition train was *en route* from Norway to Finland. This train was later blown up by saboteurs, and according to the Nazis it was Ege who had got word to the Russians about it.

The accusation, of course, is not conclusive proof of anything. But it indicates the sort of work Ege was engaged in. I had an attack of remorse and decided that Ege was one of the many unsung heroes of this war. He wore no uniform; he was awarded no symbolic sword or medal. Everyone treated him as a contemptible creature, even the Nazis who hired him, for no one likes informers. How terrible must his life have been! For no one, probably not even his wife, knew about the double role he was playing. Almost inevitably it became too much for the man to bear alone. The very spirit that made him fight against the Nazis led him to his ultimate downfall.

But there is an anti-climax to this story. The life of Friedrich Ege, the Misunderstood Man, was not yet over. The Finnish diplomat who suggested that Ege might not have been executed was right. A few weeks later *The New York Times* published another little report. Ege had not been executed. His sentence had been changed to the light one of four years' imprisonment. We can guess what happened. Ege chose, in the end, the easiest way. If you are in this kind of business, you sometimes have to work for both sides.

XII

Double Dealer

AS they glance over the map of Berlin the fingers of Allied intelligence officers and German detectives have again and again paused at the same spot. It is a point north of the Lehrter Railroad Terminal, where Invalidenstrasse crosses over into the East Sector. On the eventful evening of July 20th, 1954, shortly after nine o'clock, a limousine drove in a north-easterly direction down this street. In it sat the two men whose subsequent disappearance shook the world. Ever since, speculation has been busy with the motives which led them to switch their allegiance from West to East.

There is a bridge across the Spree Canal at that point, and the sector boundary begins at the bridge. Here the free world of the West ends; here is the entrance to a world that knows no freedom. And here Dr. Otto John, former Chief of the Office for the Defence of the Constitution of the German Federal Republic, at last set foot upon the soil of the Soviet East. He was returning home, as do all those who at last decide to throw off their mask of deception.

No wonder the perplexed officials keep coming back to that spot on the map.

At the bridge a West German customs official named Schmidt asked the two men in the Mercury car whether they had anything to declare. It was a routine question, and the men merely replied: "We are going to the Charité hospital." That explanation, too, was routine, and the official had no reason to doubt their word. Hundreds of people cross that bridge every day in order to pay a visit to the hospital. For a doctor to cross in the evening in a car was certainly common enough. The official replied with the

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stereotyped phrase that every West Berlin official at the sector boundary is required to use:

"Then I must call your attention to the fact that you are now entering the Soviet Sector."

The man at the wheel replied calmly:

"That is just where we want to go."

He stepped on the accelerator and the car disappeared into the darkness.

Those last words of Otto John on Western soil were probably the first true words he had spoken in ten years.

Ten years, the time that divided two crucial events—the unsuccessful attempt on the life of Hitler (July 20th, 1944) and his personal crisis (July 20th, 1914). During that decade Otto John had pursued an adventurous career. At the age of thirty-four he had become one of the directors of the German Lufthansa.

In 1944 he was the resistance movement's contact man with Prince Louis Ferdinand, the head of the House of Hohenzollern. After the failure of the uprising John fled to Spain in a German transport plane, disguised as a member of the crew. The British Secret Service aided him in Madrid, helped him make his way to Portugal and thence to Britain where (as is now known) he got in touch with Communists and Soviet agents.

As a gift to celebrate his "marriage" with the British Secret Service, Otto John brought with him blueprints of Peenemünde experimental station where the German secret weapons V1 and V2 were being made. For the Soviets did not possess a powerful bombing force which could attack Germany and destroy the secret base, only Britain and America could do that.

In London John lived for some five years in apparent retirement. He had a small flat in pleasant, residential Hampstead, a favourite suburb on London's North Side. To this day his name may be found in the appropriate London telephone directory: "John, Otto A. W., 14 Green Hill, N.W.3, HAMpstead 6237."

Although an exile, John was not badly off in London. From the start he had a much easier time than did many other exiled

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Germans. His self-assurance and good manners won him entry into certain circles of British society. He made rapid progress and soon numbered among his friends influential persons holding important offices in the Government.

A decisive step in his career was his meeting with Sefton Delmer, a British journalist who was in charge of a number of British radio broadcasts in the German language. This propaganda organization, known officially as "M.I. 6 Public Branch," broadcast to German soldiers and civilians and was heard all over Germany. John did some work for it and met a number of persons who exerted a crucial influence upon his future conduct.

Among them was Guy Burgess, a bright young man of good family who had been a member of the British Communist Party since 1930. There were also an old Moscow-trained German Communist named Wilhelm Koenen, and the Prussian Baron Putlitz, one of the most prominent of Soviet agents. If we consider what became of these friends of John's, we will find the explanation for conduct that, years later, seemed an insoluble riddle to the whole world.

Guy Burgess later became a secretary in Washington, but in February 1951 he was recalled, allegedly for misconduct, and shortly afterwards—on May 25th—he vanished behind the Iron Curtain.

Wilhelm Koenen's career was unequivocal from the start. In 1933 the Comintern ordered him to emigrate to London. His job was ideological direction and supervision of the Communist agents, whose influence Otto John already acknowledged. During his stay in London Koenen's work was completely satisfactory to his masters in the Kremlin. After the war he returned to Germany, where he became one of the leading functionaries in the Socialist Unity Party of the German Soviet Zone.

The most important of John's friends in London at that time, Baron Wolfgang Gans Edler von und zu Putlitz, had formerly been a young diplomat in the employ of the German Foreign Office. He came to London as Ribbentrop's attaché. The British

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Secret Service induced him to become their agent and by the time he was transferred to The Hague in 1939 he was already practised in espionage. Shortly before he was exposed, he sent a desperate plea for aid to the Secret Service. The British sent a plane to his rescue and flew him to England. Soon, however, he betrayed his British employers and began working for the Soviet Secret Service.

After the war Putlitz worked as *Oberregierungsrat* and personal secretary to Ministerial President Steltzer of Schleswig-Holstein. But as early as January 1947 he moved into the Soviet Zone for no apparent reason. Since then he has been contact man for Soviet intelligence with Communists and fellow-travellers in the West. It was he who brought Guy Burgess to safety behind the Iron Curtain.

After the capitulation of Germany Dr. John helped the British prosecutors gather material for the Nuremberg war criminal trials. He was admitted to the Bar in London. In 1949 he was in Hamburg, where Field-Marshal Manstein was being tried. Otto John served as assistant to the British prosecutor. The attorney for the defence was a famous British lawyer named Paget. Leading Englishmen, including Sir Winston Churchill, had assured their former enemy a good defence lawyer. Was Otto John aware of the weirdness of this situation?

Manstein was sentenced to eighteen years' imprisonment.

What was Otto John's reaction? Manstein should have been hanged, he exclaimed in fury. Under the surface of his calm he was apparently a person of unstable emotions. Clearly, Otto John was not at peace with himself—or with his country. He was still trying to escape—from himself?

Although his merciless prosecution of Manstein made him extremely unpopular throughout Germany—not only among incorrigible Nazis—Otto John continued to advance rapidly. When the German Federal Republic set up an authority intended to protect the young State from revolutionaries of the right or the

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left, John was entrusted with the task of directing this organization. He owed his appointment to his British friends. In December 1950 he was appointed Chief of the Office for the Defence of the Constitution.

Even the outward trappings of this organization—or rather the lack of them—suggested a secret service. In the new, four-storey building on Brueckenstrasse in Cologne was an unmarked door on one of the top floors. Here was the office—in appearance nothing of any consequence at all. The telephone numbers were unlisted. The chief's address was unknown—and for quite a while nothing at all was known about his activities. Everything was done according to the rules and regulations of intelligence agencies.

No one dreamed that this office and its chief would, three and a half years hence, produce one of the greatest political scandals of the postwar era.

Although the scandal was nevertheless inevitable, it cannot be wholly explained by condemning Dr. Otto John as a scoundrel. No human being is born a scoundrel. People who knew Otto John in his youth, when he attended the *Volksschule* and then the *Gymnasium* in Wiesbaden, say that he was just as sensitive to the merest hint that he might be lying as any other boy. He was neither an especially bad boy nor a model of deportment. In fact, he attracted very little attention at all; he was in many respects completely colourless. He remained just as colourless in Marburg, where he served an apprenticeship in the pharmaceutical trade, and in law school at the Goethe University in Frankfurt.

He was not a scoundrel. But he was ambitious, and perhaps it may be said that his character was not especially strong. Millions of people who are just as ambitious and just as weak in character never become traitors. Otto John did.

What made him a traitor was the step that took him from the daylight world of clear, straightforward relationships to the twilight world of espionage. Then his ambition became dangerous, and his weak character capitulated to evil. But before he betrayed

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the cause he was serving he had first to betray himself, to betray the human being he was.

Baron Putlitz was only one of the many Soviet agents whom Otto John had met. The most important link between the chief of German counter-espionage and the Moscow spy centre was Dr. Wolfgang Wohlgemuth, a West Berlin physician of decidedly unstable character who had a fondness for good living. John and Wohlgemuth had been introduced to one another during the war by Professor Sauerbruch, who was the young doctor's teacher. They became friends and remained friends even after 1910—Wohlgemuth avowedly a Communist and Dr. John the man who was supposed to guard the Federal Republic against Communism. This friendship was Otto John's direct wire to the East, for Wohlgemuth is an intimate as well as the personal physician of Walter Ulbricht, Franz Dähle and of Ernst Wollweber, the chief of Soviet Zone espionage.

In March 1914 Putlitz conducted a series of secret talks in Cologne with his old friend. At this time John's position was already distinctly shaky. He was being publicly attacked from many sides. He therefore made use of his meeting with Putlitz to pull off an extremely clever stunt: he reported to the British authorities that Putlitz had tried to persuade him to come over to the East.

In this way John hoped to restore confidence in himself and to strengthen his position against opponents and rivals. But even this trick did not help. Within four months it became apparent to him that he could not hold on to his job. In Bonn he was becoming more and more isolated—not because his dilemma was understood, but because he was considered to be a person of weak character unsuitable for so important a position.

On July 19th, 1914, almost ten years to the day that Otto John had entered a Lufthansa plane disguised as an aircraftsman and had escaped to Madrid, he was again in Berlin. Next day a memorial meeting was to be held to honour the victims of the unsuccessful uprising of July 20th, 1914. On the eve of that

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meeting the West Berlin Senate gave a reception. Among the guests was a tall, broad-shouldered, lithe man with thinning blond hair, very elegantly dressed: Dr. Otto John. He seemed to be in a cheerful, serene mood.

John stopped to talk with an old acquaintance who had been with him in the anti-Hitler plot of ten years before. And in spite of his outward calm, John talked freely to this friend.

"The old man doesn't like me," he said.

The "old man" was Konrad Adenauer, the Chancellor of Germany, whose stiff, frozen features kept bobbing up and down out of the sea of faces. Scornfully John glanced at the milling crowd.

"It's my impression that the memorial for July 20th is degenerating into a social occasion," he remarked. There was a bitter undertone in his voice, a note of suppressed fury.

This mood was still upon him after the reception, when he and his wife drove out to the Hotel Schätzle, where they were staying. The couple had separate rooms there. Frau John was very tired after the strenuous day, and soon retired to her room. At seven o'clock in the evening John bade her good-bye, saying he had to return to town to meet a friend.

In front of the hotel a cab driver named Jochen Bartelke was waiting in his cab. "To the Maison Française," John said. "You mean the 'Maison de France,' don't you?" the driver corrected him. He noticed that John looked very weary. During the drive little was said, although John was usually quite talkative. In front of the restaurant "Maison de France," on the corner of Kurfuerstendamm and Uhlandstrasse, Bartelke stopped and opened the door. Without a word John paid him, gave him a fifty-pfennig tip, and left.

It is only a few steps from the "Maison de France" to Uhlandstrasse 175. John crossed the street, entered and went up the marble steps. He paused in front of a door marked "Dr. med. Wohlgemuth," and rang.

A young girl opened the door.

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"Dr. Wohlgemuth is expecting me," Dr. John said. He did not give his name. But the girl had been informed and led him directly to the doctor's private room.

Out of the consulting room stepped a tall, slender man. If a movie producer were looking for an actor to play the part of a successful gynæcologist, he would have found Dr. Wolfgang Wohlgemuth perfect for the role. Elegant and gracious in manner, fine head framed in a mane of grey hair, large, deep-set eyes under powerful, arched brows, Dr. Wohlgemuth was *the* gynæcologist of West Berlin—in fact of all Berlin, for he also practised in the Charité hospital in the East Sector. He was well known in East and West. Professor Sauerbruch had called him his most talented pupil. He was also a considerable lady's man whose amours numbered as many as his successful operations. He had been married three times. In the bars around Kurfuerstendamm he was very well known indeed. He was fond of drink—in large quantities. Everybody knew him. But his almost legendary fame was due to certain nights when he would walk dreamily up to the jazz trumpeter or saxophonist in a band, without a word take the instrument from the man's hand, lean backward against the piano and with closed eyes play a blues number. His playing was masterly. The son of a Leipzig professor of music, he had been turned out of doors by his parents more than twenty years before because they could not put up with his scandalous behaviour.

John and Wohlgemuth greeted one another warmly, like the good friends they were. A bold operation of Wohlgemuth's had once saved the life of John's younger brother, Hans; saved him for the hangman, incidentally, for during the last days of the war Hans John was executed for his part in the July 20th plot.

One single sentence of the two men's conversation that evening of July 20th, 1944, has been recorded. As Dr. Wohlgemuth opened the door Sister Ursula, the nurse, heard Dr. John saying: "They are all Nazi whelps . . ." There was bitterness and fury in his voice.

At nine o'clock in the evening Sister Ursula heard the two men

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go out. She did not know where they were bound and had no suspicion of the extraordinary act that was about to take place. She did not know she had heard the words of a man who had failed—as an official, as a politician and as a human being. For Dr. Otto John was no longer a hunter; he had become the pursued.

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Strangely enough, after Otto John's disappearance the wildest theories were expressed about him in the Western world. There was talk of kidnapping, of mysterious drugs or hypnosis, of mental depression and despair, of threats of blackmail, of trickery. The Minister of the Interior of the Federal Republic capped the confusion by asserting that John had gone to the East Sector only in order to obtain a medical certificate for an acquaintance, and had then been overpowered. But no one hit upon the most obvious explanation of all—or no one wanted to suggest it: that John had been a traitor all along. Or, to put it from his point of view, that he had been thoroughly consistent in all his activities. Given that explanation, there is no need to examine the motives. It may be taken for granted that it was not Dr. Wohlgemuth who succeeded in deceiving this master of espionage. On the contrary, Otto John utilized his contact man as a pilot to take him across the sector boundary. Wohlgemuth then could not help remaining in the East, although he had to abandon his profitable practice in West Berlin.

The official bewilderment over the case of Otto John is all the more incomprehensible because the Western world should have realized at once that here was a striking parallel to the case of Alger Hiss.

Even Allen Welsh Dulles, the head of the American Central Intelligence Agency, a man of liberal views if there ever was one, looked like a Fascist to Dr. John. On the other hand, Dulles did not take John completely into his confidence. After being wined and dined in England and entertained in Washington, John went on to the West Coast, where he had an aunt and a

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brother-in-law living in Hollywood. During his three days there John hardly stepped out of the house. He took no interest in the standard sights of the movie capital, but stayed in and mullied over his recent experiences.

"I was terribly disappointed in Washington," he told his relatives. "Allen Dulles gave me a completely cold reception. That's symbolic of how he treats all of us, but he's perfectly happy to employ former Nazis. The American Secret Service is hand-in-glove with the old military clique in Germany. Trying to work with the Americans is hopeless."

His relatives, loyal American citizens, could not follow John's reasoning. They were disturbed by his wild look, as well as by the boundless resentment towards all things American which came out in everything he said.

He was supposed to help them with some business matters back in Germany—a sizeable inheritance was involved—but in this matter, too, he seemed deranged. All in all, they were happy when he left California to return to Germany.

Altogether, there had been no red carpet rolled out for John in the United States. His visit went unmentioned even by the newspapers. The few people who met him were repulsed by his manner. The truth of the matter is that he was a double agent. In the end he went completely over to the other side. It is a question which crops up time and time again with secret agents. Unless the man is a real patriot, he is always apt to be working for two masters.

What is John's real aim? He dreams of power. Adenauer will die one of these days and he, Dr. Otto John, is a likely candidate for the chancellorship of a reunited, pro-Communist Germany. Perhaps it isn't quite the pipe dream it appears to be.

XIII

Prisoner in the Legation

IT was a typical autumnal evening in London, rainy and foggy, that 1st of October 1896, when a young Chinese stepped out of the train at Euston Station. Only a few hours earlier he had disembarked from the *Majestic* when it docked at Liverpool. Throughout the ship's voyage from New York this passenger had kept more or less to himself.

In his early twenties, the young Chinese resembled the type of serious student from the Orient frequently seen in London. He wore a well-cut suit, had a neat little moustache and kept his black hair extremely close clipped. His walk was firm and springy, with a deliberately erect military carriage.

For such a young man the Chinese visitor had had an extremely adventurous career. In fact, he had circled the world, fleeing from his native country and the wrath of its emperor. He had eaten the bitter bread of exile in Macao, Hong Kong, Singapore, Yokohama, Batavia, Honolulu and San Francisco. And now he was in London, facing still more adventures. He hailed a hansom cab and asked the driver to take him to Haxell's Hotel in the Strand.

This new chapter in his life certainly seemed to be opening in a propitious manner. His hotel room proved very comfortable, the atmosphere of the hotel congenial. In spite of the fog and rain the young Oriental went out for a stroll in the city streets. The stream of carriages, the crowds, the mood of London, all struck him as pleasant. On the strength of these happy impressions he decided to look up a former teacher of his, Dr. James Cantlie, formerly head of the Medical College in Hong Kong and now back in London.

The Cantlies greeted their young visitor with warmth. Their

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home at 46 Devonshire Street, a typical London house with a small garden in the rear, struck him as charming. They had a great deal to talk about. The Cantlies were especially eager for the news of some of their mutual friends who seemed to have dropped out of existence in Imperial China. On hearing of something of the young man's recent experiences, and the circumstances which had brought him to London, Dr. Cantlie looked grave. "You know we don't live very far from the Chinese Legation," he said. "Don't you think you should pay your respects to the Chinese Government?"

Mrs. Cantlie, who did not always recognize her husband's jokes, demurred. "You'd better give that place a wide berth as long as you are here," she said. "They are quite capable of kidnapping you and shipping you back."

As a matter of fact, the Chinese visitor fitted into London almost as though it were his native city. His way of dressing was completely European, and his English was faultless. London gave him a feeling of exhilaration and it seemed that, for the time being, he had reached the end of his wanderings.

The following day he paid a call on another of his former teachers, Dr. Henry Manson. Here again he was warned to keep away from the Chinese Legation. The young man did not take these words too seriously. He might be wanted back in China, but here in London, half a world away, he was perfectly safe. He had by now moved from the hotel, and with the help of the Cantlies had found suitable lodgings in Gray's Inn Road. Eleven days after his arrival the young Chinese left his rooms and started out for Devonshire Street, where he was to visit the Cantlie family and accompany them to church. He had reached Oxford Circus, when a thought which had troubled him crystallized into certainty. He knew he was being followed and that, in fact, he was not far from the Chinese Legation at Portland Place, a thoroughfare which he had up to now studiously avoided. Glancing behind him, he saw a Chinese in mandarin attire standing only a few yards away. Nor was the man's proximity accidental,

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for now the Chinese quickened his steps and caught up with the student just as he crossed the road. With a polite smile the older man addressed the student:

"Are you a citizen of Japan or China, sir?" He spoke excellent English.

"Of China," said the student, glancing at his unknown interrogator.

"Of what part of China, may I ask?"

"Canton."

"That makes us compatriots. We speak the same dialect. I, too, am from Canton," said the unknown, slipping into Chinese.

The two strolled on together now, talking in their native language. They reached Cavendish Street and here suddenly another compatriot, also in mandarin clothing, made his appearance. Quietly, as though it were the most natural thing in the world, he joined the party, walking on the left side of the Chinese student.

The conversation rippled on, still in the politest Cantonese. The new member of the party invited his two countrymen to his room for tea.

"I'm very sorry to have to refuse your invitation," the student excused himself. "I am on the way to meet some friends, and then we're going to church. Another time, perhaps."

Hereabouts and seemingly from nowhere a third Chinaman appeared, also in mandarin gown. The face of this man was distinctly unattractive; he looked capable of any brutality. Now the student's new friends dropped their pretence of politeness. They seized their victim by his arms, steered him around a corner, and there it was—49 Portland Place. A door opened as though they were expected. The student was hustled up the stairs and into the hallway.

He had not yet completely grasped the situation. It had all happened so quickly, in broad daylight and in the calm of a London Sunday. Could it be that the Chinese Secret Service

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had finally caught up with him, after he had put half the world between them and himself?

A few minutes later he knew. He had been brought to a huge room full of costly furniture, locked in and left alone.

There was an iron bar across the handsome door and he was no longer in any doubt—he was being held captive in the Imperial Chinese Legation. Back in Devonshire Street, his friends the Cantlies would be waiting for him. Would they realize what his absence meant, or would they think he had simply forgotten his appointment? And what did the people at the Legation have in mind for him? He took refuge in a stoic calm which came easily to his Oriental temperament. He would find that out soon enough.

Two hours later he was led to another room. He realized he was on the second floor of the Legation building. Of this latter fact there could be no doubt, since the only persons in the corridors were Chinese, some in official dress. Two Chinese, who maintained an obstinate silence, now came and searched him. Most of his belongings were taken away, even the watch in his pocket. He was now transferred to yet another room, this time on the third floor. The small windows were heavily barred. The view was of rooftops, chimney pots, fog and smoke.

Sunk in thought, the prisoner was considering and marvelling at the speed and smoothness with which the kidnapping had taken place, when the door was unbolted. A tall, white-haired Englishman entered the "cell." Much later the student learned that he was Sir Halliday Macartney, a barrister who worked for the Chinese Government as counsellor and adviser.

"My dear young man," he began, "you are now on Chinese territory. To all intents and purposes you are in China, under Chinese law. May I have your name?"

The exile gave him it.

The Britisher smiled faintly. "We know better. Your name is Sun Wen." It was the name the student had used signing petitions for reform, political pamphlets and manifestos. "No sense

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beating about the bush, my dear young man," the Britisher continued. "We have been fully informed of all your movements. We had a message from the United States telling us that you were arriving on the *Majestic*. The Chinese Minister has requested your arrest."

"May I inquire why?"

"You know only too well. You have displeased your Emperor and your Government, haven't you?"

The prisoner remained silent. He had acted on deep convictions, knowing that to do that, under an absolutist Government, was a crime.

Meanwhile the Britisher continued his accusations. His heart was evidently in the case, and for a man so thoroughly western in appearance and demeanour he was certainly a loyal minion of his Chinese employer.

"Sun Wen, you drew up a petition calling for widespread reform and sent it to the Tsung-Li-Yamen in Peking, with the request that it be presented to the Emperor."

"I did."

"We in London have been ordered to detain you until we find out the Emperor's personal wishes regarding you."

The prisoner could only too vividly imagine what form the Emperor's pleasure would take. He saw a headsman and a gleaming sword blade.

"May I inform my English friends of my presence at the Legation?"

"No, this you cannot do. You may, however, write a letter to your landlord instructing him to release your belongings, which will then be at your disposal."

The prisoner complied. That was all Sir Halliday cared to say to him for the present, for he strolled out of the room and left the young man to his thoughts.

In the notes he made on his imprisonment, he recorded this comment on the incident:

"It was very evident that my interrogator was playing a crafty

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game to get hold of my effects, and more especially my papers, in the hope of finding correspondence, whereby to ascertain who my Chinese accomplices were."

An hour later he was startled by a fearful noise. Carpenters were installing a second lock on his door. In addition to this, he gathered that two guards were being ordered to stand in front of his door to maintain an unceasing watch. Hearing the guards conversing in Cantonese, the prisoner tried to speak to them through the door, but they did not reply and instead entered the room and again searched him. This time they took away his keys and pocket knife. However, they failed to find a wad of banknotes he was carrying.

The day passed without further incident. In the late afternoon the guards asked him what he wanted to eat. Physically exhausted and psychologically drained, he asked only for a glass of milk. At seven, two English servants came to clean his room and bring coal and wood for the fireplace, but evidently they had strict orders and ignored his presence as though the room were empty.

He passed a restless night. Though the room was provided with a comfortable bed, he did not bother to undress. He could hear the guards talking, and from outside the windows the night noises of the city, the sound of trotting cab horses, the clatter of hoofs and rolling of wheels on cobblestones. Unwelcome thoughts crowded his mind. He was not afraid to die, but not this way—in an ignoble trap like this. Why did Macartney, an Englishman of high position, care to serve a feudal tyranny?

The next morning found the prisoner looking pale and peaked. His mind, however, was sharper than it had been the previous day, and he was determined to overlook no possibility for escape. He would try bribery. Above all, he must play for time. His friends had cautioned him not to go near the Legation. When they realized that he was missing, they would know where to look.

His first visitor that day was Kidnapper No. 1, the man who had engaged him in conversation on the street. He gave his name

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as Tang and identified himself as one of the many secretaries of the Imperial Chinese Legation.

The diary preserves this conversation. "Our first meeting," Tang said, "was more or less in line with official duty. I now come to talk to you as a friend. You had better confess that you are Sun Wen. There's no sense denying it. All arrangements have been made for your return to China."

Tang could not resist being sarcastic and said: "You are well known at home. The Emperor and the Tsung-Li-Yamen are acquainted with your activities. Just think what a wonderful chance you'll have to distinguish yourself, what a beautiful ending for a career, what an example you will be able to give of a courageous death. In that way you will become a real hero."

"Why do you assume I am going to die?" asked the prisoner, trying to sound out his captors' plans. "After all, I am not in China, but in England, a free country. What can you do to me here? Of course you could have me done away with right here in the Legation. That is certainly something you could easily do. But without a trial, such an act would be considered murder here, and these things have a way of leaking out. You wouldn't want any trouble with the British authorities. Then again, you might try to have me extradited, but such a procedure takes a long time. Besides, the British Government would learn of my illegal imprisonment. I don't think the English would turn me over to you anyway—this country has a tradition for providing political asylum."

A sneer appeared on the face of the Legation secretary.

"Naturally we won't ask for extradition—that would be a very stupid thing to do. A freighter is waiting for you in Southampton right now. We will have no trouble at all in pacifying you and transferring you from the Legation building to the ship—after which you will of course be put in chains. Before the ship reaches Hong Kong it will be met by a gunboat which will take you aboard for Canton. That is where your execution will take place."

"Without a trial, I suppose," the prisoner said dryly.

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"The proper formalities will be observed. We are not barbarians, you know. First the trial and then the beheading," the middle-aged official answered politely and with equal dryness.

"Don't you think you are running a risk? What if the British police should get to know of this thing? I might get word through or try to escape. Then you'd all be in hot water."

Tang assured his prisoner that these eventualities were extremely remote. He was well guarded here and there would be no slip-up.

"Have you forgotten about the officers and crew of the ship which is supposed to take me back?" asked the prisoner. "They will all know something is going on. The docks are teeming with people. They're bound to notice something and make a stir."

Tang seemed unmoved. Everything had been thought of, he said. The owners of the ship were close friends of Sir Halliday Macartney. They were interested in trade with China. He had their word for it that no untoward incident would occur.

The more the prisoner talked with Tang, the more he would learn of the plot, he realized, and this could certainly be useful to him. Tang seemed not at all averse to discussing the arrangements, so perfectly sure was he that the situation was under control. For example, Tang told him that he would "travel" on one of the Glen Line steamers during the coming week. The Minister had not been willing to charter a ship exclusively for the purpose of conveying him to justice.

The prisoner pointed out that the enterprise looked rather difficult and complicated. One mis-step and the whole thing would fall through. Hadn't they better change their minds and set him free?

Tang did not seem to appreciate this kind of humour. Not a muscle of his face moved as he replied: "You understand the problem very well. You are a clever man. Too bad you are not loyal to us and dream only of revolution. As it happens, you are right. We are not very pleased with this plan. If we had our way, we would dispose of you here in the Legation. That is a far more

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practical way of doing it. But our orders are to have you sent to China. The Emperor wishes it."

The prisoner's diary records more of this fateful conversation:

"For my edification and consolation, Tang then cited the case of a Korean patriot who, escaping from Korea to Japan, was induced by a countryman to go to Shanghai where he was put to death in the British concession. His dead body was sent back by the Chinese to Korea for 'punishment,' and on arrival there was decapitated, while the murderer was rewarded and given an important political post. Tang was evidently fondly cherishing the belief that he would be similarly promoted by his Government for arresting me and securing my death. I asked him why he should be so cruel, to which he replied: 'This is by order of the Emperor who wants you captured at any price, preferably alive.'"

The prisoner refused to lose his calm. As detachedly as if someone else's life were at stake, he continued to discuss various possibilities. "If the British Government should get to know of this it may declare all members of this Legation *persona non grata*? In which case you would have to return to China. My people in the province of Kwang-Tung would be on the lookout for a chance to revenge me. I hate to think what they would do to you and your entire family in payment for your act of treachery."

As the prisoner had guessed, this blow found its mark. Family feuds and bloody acts of revenge were very real concepts in the mind of Tang. He suddenly became apologetic and anxious to prove to the prisoner that he was only obeying orders. He was but a minor official—he had to do as his superiors commanded, no matter how personally repugnant it was to himself. . . . He asked for understanding and forgiveness. In fact, he became quite conciliatory and ventured to offer the young man a helpful suggestion.

"As I see it, you still have a small chance for life. What you must do is to deny that you had anything to do with the Canton plot and the reform plans. Accuse your accusers. Say that the whole thing is a trap sprung by the mandarins. Declare that you

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came voluntarily to the Legation to clear yourself and to ask for a review of your case."

It seemed a rather servile line to take. However, since no other course was open, the prisoner agreed to write such a letter. Perhaps it would soften the hearts of his kidnappers after all. Tang took the letter with a peculiar smile. It was the last the prisoner ever saw of him.

As the days went by, the young man had time to realize that he had fallen into a trap. He'd been foolish to write such a letter and acknowledge that he had come to the Legation of his own accord. This would clear the Legation with the British authorities, at least to some extent.

In despair as time ran out, he was ready to try anything, futile as it might seem, to reach the outside world. On two occasions he tried to smuggle notes to his friends, but none of the servants could be bribed. He wrote short notes on tiny bits of paper and threw them out of the window in the hope that some passer-by would find them. The first ones were caught in the wind, tossed up and whirled about for a moment. He watched them fall into a drain pipe on an adjacent roof.

He wrote other notes and weighted them with copper coins to make sure they would fall to the street. One fell into the garden of the adjoining house, No. 51 Portland Place, the home of Viscount Powerscourt. Another note fell on the roof of No. 53. The third and last fell on the street and was spotted by the Legation guards.

That was the end of the prisoner's attempt to draw attention to his plight. Some servants entered his room and fastened wooden boards over his windows. The room was now in total darkness.

"I was now worse off than ever," wrote the young man who had dared to defy an Emperor, "for my sole means of communication with the outside world seemed gone."

The prisoner had been raised as a Christian and he found consolation in prayer. He spent many hours praying, at least it seemed so, for he no longer had any way of estimating the

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passage of time. He didn't know whether one day went by or many. It was perpetual night in his room and blackest night in his soul. His only light came from the fire.

He had one last chance and that was to appeal to the two English servants who appeared daily to clean his room, bring him food and tend the fire. They performed their duties like machines, never speaking nor even seeming to see him. However, the younger of the two had a sympathetic face. His name was Edward Cole. So one morning the prisoner summoned up all his resolution and spoke to the man.

"Sir, will you not do something for me?" he asked.

To call a servant "sir" was sufficiently unusual for the man to start and look at the prisoner as though seeing him for the first time. "Who are you?" he asked in low, frightened tones. "And what do you want of me?"

"I am a political refugee from China. I came to England to seek the protection of the British Government. I am a Christian just like yourself. You must have read in the newspapers that the Sultan of Turkey is massacring the Armenian Christians. Well, the Emperor of China wants to kill me because I am a Christian, too. I belong to a political party that wants good government and democratic freedom for all in China, the way it is in England. I have done no harm to anyone—I was brought here by trickery and am being held under duress."

It was rash of him to say as much as he did, for the guards might be listening outside the door. But he felt it was the only way to win the man's sympathy.

Cole did not answer immediately. He busied himself sweeping the floor and hearth. At last he said in a whisper: "I don't know whether the British Government would want to help you. After all, you are a foreigner and these people are your own countrymen."

Desperation sharpened the prisoner's wits and urgently he replied: "The British Government would surely help me. That is why I am being kept here by force. Otherwise, don't you see,

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the Chinese Government would have to ask for my official extradition."

The impassive servant went on with his work. There was no way of telling whether he felt sympathetic, or whether the prisoner's plea fell on deaf ears. "My life is in your hands, sir," the prisoner pleaded. "If the proper authorities are informed of my confinement I shall be saved. Otherwise it means death for me. Is it not better to save a life than to see it destroyed? Doesn't your duty as a Christian come before your duty to your employers?"

One thing was certain—Cole had never been appealed to in such terms before. He had always been a good, conscientious servant and discreet enough to realize that he was not concerned in the business of his superiors.

With the calm impersonality of a perfect servant, he finished his work and withdrew.

It was another sleepless night for the prisoner. Had he won Cole over—or would Cole go to his employers and reveal all he had said?

In the morning Cole brought him his breakfast. He deposited it on a table and left, avoiding the prisoner's piteous eyes. Returning in the evening with a scuttle of coal, the servant again did not utter a word. Instead he pointed towards the scuttle he had brought in, and left the room.

Tucked in among the coals was a scrap of white paper. The prisoner snatched it up and read:

"I am willing to bring a letter to one of your friends, but not to the police. You must not write at the table as the guards can see through the keyhole. If you write on your bed, you cannot be seen from the hall."

The prisoner lay down on his bed and faced the wall. With a tiny stub of a pencil he wrote a message on an old and dirty visiting card of his. From this message, preserved for reasons which will be clear later in the story, we learn that the prisoner's written English was not as good as his speech.

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His note read:

"To Dr. James Cantlie
46 Devonshire Street

"Please take care of the messenger for me at present, he is very poor and will lose his work by doing for me. I was kidnapped into the Chinese Legation on Sunday and shall be smuggled out from England to China for death. Pray rescue me quick? A ship is already chartered by C.L. for the service to take me to China and I shall be locked up all the way without communication to anybody. O! Woe to me!"

But the note was not delivered as its writer had written it. Cole waited until October 17th, a Saturday and his day off. Ever discreet, he did not deliver the prisoner's note, but sent one of his own by express messenger. It read:

"There is a friend of yours imprisoned in the Chinese Legation since last Sunday. They intend to send him out to China where it is certain that they will execute him. It is very sad for the poor man and unless something is done at once he will be taken away and no one will know it. I dare not sign my name but this is the truth, so believe what I say. Whatever you do must be done at once or it will be too late. His name is, I believe, Lin Yen Sen."

The Cantlies were enjoying a typical Saturday night at home, reading by the fireplace when this letter arrived. They had of course been aware of the defection of their Chinese friend, but they knew that Orientals often acted oddly by English standards and did not take his absence much to heart. They were sure he would turn up soon, with a perfectly good explanation for his behaviour.

Cantlie knew that he had to act quickly. A professor of medicine, he knew little about investigations, spies, kidnapping and politics in general. But he knew that Sir Halliday Macartney was the legal counsel for the Chinese Government, so he decided to see him

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first. It never occurred to him to apply directly to the police. He happened to know that Sir Halliday lived nearby, at 3 Harley Place, in an impressive four-storey building of grey stone. But the house was closed, the shades pulled down and the high iron gate locked. Perhaps its owner had gone to the country for the week-end.

A constable on duty in nearby Marylebone Road informed the anxious-looking gentleman that the house had been closed for at least six months. It was at this point that Dr. Cantlie decided to go to the nearest police station. There an inspector listened to his story and advised Cantlie to go to Scotland Yard.

The officers at police headquarters were extremely polite. But the story was so fantastic, so implausible and un-English, that they began to imagine that the doctor must be a crank or a bit potty. They listened and took down the facts. They would, they assured Dr. Cantlie, report the matter to their superiors. That was as far as Dr. Cantlie had got when, around midnight, he left and walked home.

There was not much he could do at that hour of the night, Cantlie decided. But he had no intention of leaving the matter there. At eight o'clock the next morning he was out of his house, consulting a friend. The two men deliberated a long time, and decided that if Scotland Yard failed to act it might be advisable to get someone to make a private approach to the Legation.

Once more Cantlie stopped at Harley Place, where he hoped to find at least the caretaker, who would tell him how to get in touch with Macartney. The place was completely deserted.

Finally Cantlie went home, exhausted from his long tramp across London. He found Cole waiting for him in the living room, and heard the "wild story" from the man's own lips.

Cantlie mentioned his fruitless visits to the Macartney residence. Cole raised his eyebrows. Sir Halliday was living in town and paid daily visits to the Legation, he said. In his opinion Macartney had a large part in the incident.

Cantlie immediately saw that this complicated the matter. A

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man of Macartney's standing had great power and influence. At this point Cole volunteered further information. Macartney, he alleged, had passed word around the Legation that the prisoner was a dangerous megalomaniac, who was being kept under lock and key for his own good. He was due to be shipped home on Tuesday. A captain and some sailors had come to the Legation to discuss the matter.

That gave them, Cantlie saw, forty-eight hours in which to act. He set off immediately to see his medical colleague, Dr. Manson. Together they went to Scotland Yard to make another appeal for help.

The officer on duty listened to their story. He consulted the records. "You were here on Saturday night," he said. "No new facts have turned up since to confirm your story."

In desperation the two doctors decided to go directly to the Foreign Office. It was not far, but gaining admittance was another story. They were politely informed that the clerk in charge could not see them before five in the afternoon.

They decided to wait and in due time were ushered into the office of this personage. He heard them out and with a shrug of his shoulders regretfully informed the gentlemen that since the day was Sunday, no action could be taken. He would report the matter to his superiors early next morning.

The doctors were dismayed. What if the Chinese should change their plans and ship the prisoner out a day earlier? They expressed their indignation: the entire British law enforcement system seemed to be in a state of paralysis because it happened to be Sunday.

The Foreign Office official tried to explain that this was a delicate matter involving foreign relations, diplomatic privileges, immunities and international law. He personally was not empowered to deal with such a problem. The doctors would have to wait as he had suggested.

The doctors, however, were not easily discouraged. They stood together outside the Foreign Office debating the next move

Prisoner in the Legation

and Cantlie suggested that although he was too well known to go to the Chinese Legation, there was no reason why Dr. Manson should not be admitted. He must go and take the bull by the horns. If he were not back within an hour, Cantlie would inform Scotland Yard.

It was already 6.30 p.m. when Dr. Manson rang the bell at No. 49 Portland Place. An exemplary English footman opened the door. Dr. Manson was led into an anteroom which was beautifully furnished with silver and gold brocades, bronze Buddhas and a huge portrait of the Emperor.

Dr. Manson had asked to see one of the attachés on an urgent matter. He had not long to wait before Tang entered the room. Bowing and smiling, the Chinese greeted the flustered Englishman who, waiving the usual formalities of greeting, stated the reason for his visit.

"A friend of mine, one of my former medical students in China, is being held prisoner in this Legation. I demand to see him."

Tang's face became cold, stony and cruel.

"We have no prisoners in this Legation. What is the name of this young man you seek?"

"Sun Wen."

"No man of that name is under this roof."

"I know he is being held here, and so does Scotland Yard and the Foreign Office."

Tang remained imperturbable. He assured his excited visitor that it was all a great mistake. Perhaps someone was playing a joke on him. So convincing was the official's manner that Manson ended by believing him. When he rejoined Dr. Cantlie thirty minutes later, Manson told him that the story really was a bit preposterous. The people at the Legation knew nothing of the matter.

Dr. Cantlie, however, was more disturbed than ever. He could not subscribe to his friend's interpretation. In fact, he was convinced that the danger for his Chinese friend had increased as a

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result of the visit to the Legation. Something must be done quickly or the prisoner would be hustled on board the boat, which would perhaps leave earlier than planned. Then and there Cantlie decided to put a private detective on the job—to keep watch on the Legation in case an attempt was made to remove the prisoner. But then he remembered it was Sunday, a Victorian Sunday, and knew that nobody would be available.

Cantlie went back to Scotland Yard and implored them to set some detective to watch the Legation. He was told that the place was out of their zone; he was advised to go to the appropriate West End Police Station.

There the good doctor experienced his usual trouble in making the officers see that this was a real emergency. In the absence of concrete evidence the police had no authority to place a guard over the Chinese Legation. As a last resort, Cantlie offered a substantial sum to any constable off duty who would undertake the surveillance as a private job. The officers at the station were on duty all night; they were kind enough to recommend a chap who lived in Islington, a retired member of the force, who was usually glad for a job of some sort.

On his way to Islington Cantlie had to pass Fleet Street. Here he had an inspiration. He walked into the offices of *The Times* and asked to see a member of the editorial staff.

Nobody showed any eagerness to help him. The clerk in the front office insisted that the gentleman state the reason for the desired interview. Fuming with impatience, Cantlie took the slip of paper the clerk offered and wrote these words:

“Brutal kidnapping at the Chinese Legation; immediate danger of death.”

The receptionist looked quite dumbfounded. It was, apparently, not every day that visitors came with such messages. But the person in question would not be available until ten in the evening. “Come back then,” the clerk said.

“I will,” Cantlie said grimly.

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At Islington the doctor discovered that the retired member of the constabulary had something else he had to do that night. He promised, however, to find a substitute.

By this time Dr. Cantlie was dead tired, having spent the whole day on his quest for help. He was not a young man, but he returned to *The Times* office, where a vigorous-looking veteran journalist listened to his story. That it was an astonishing story he was the first to admit. Still, it was of such importance and delicacy, having regard to the circumstances, that he would be unable to do anything until it was referred to the editorial board.

Dr. Cantlie left in utter disgust. He had knocked at every possible door and been turned away. His efforts, it seemed, had failed completely.

It was eleven-thirty when he arrived home. Tired as he was, he was in no mood for sleep. His wife tried to calm him; together they discussed what else could be done. "Perhaps something will suggest itself in the morning," Mrs. Cantlie suggested. But this only made the doctor more restless. He couldn't go to sleep while that good young man might be being murdered. He was a medical scientist; his life had been devoted to teaching and research, and in the course of his work he had learned the value of persistence. One had to go on trying.

Operating on this assumption, Dr. Cantlie decided to skip sleep for one night. He put on some warmer clothes and set out for the Chinese Legation; he would watch it himself, he decided. He stayed there until the following morning and then paid a visit to Salter's Detective Agency as soon as it opened. There he engaged a number of agents to watch the Chinese Legation day and night.

His next call was to the Foreign Office, where he told his story once more, this time in the form of a sworn statement. The reaction here was not too encouraging. Officials pointed out that the only evidence was the alleged prisoner's own note claiming that he had been kidnapped. The rest was hearsay and could be

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very regrettable, diplomatically speaking, if it turned out to be a hoax.

The Foreign office, however, asked Scotland Yard to investigate whether the Chinese Legation had made a charter or similar arrangement with any of the shipping lines.

Scotland Yard could work fast if it wanted to. The answer came promptly that such a charter had been drawn up with the Glen Line for a ship due to leave on Tuesday. The vessel had been chartered for a mixed cargo to China. There was also to be one passenger; his name was not given; he was merely identified as a Chinese national.

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In the meantime the young man held behind the windows of the Chinese Legation was dying all the deaths which uncertainty can provoke. He had no idea whether Cole could be trusted sufficiently to have passed his message on to Dr. Cantlie.

The first real gleam of hope came when Cole brought in the usual evening scuttle of coal. Tucked into it was a note: "Be hopeful," it said, "we are working for you."

Still, this was no assurance that the rescuers would make it in time. Meanwhile Cole sent another note to Dr. Cantlie informing him:

"I shall have a good opportunity to let your friend out on the roof of the next house in Portland Place tonight. If you think it advisable to have someone there waiting to receive him, and I am able to do it, find means to let me know."

Cantlie seized on this suggestion. He hurried to Scotland Yard again with a plea to have them put some police officers on the roof of the neighbouring house. But the police decided against it. Such a procedure was beneath their dignity; the proper legal steps had been taken and soon the order would come through for the Legation to open its doors for inspection.

On October 22nd, England's great contribution to the rights of man, the writ of habeas corpus, was requested on behalf of the

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unknown prisoner, but unfortunately the judge before whom the application was made refused to grant it.

Nevertheless it brought England's newspapers into the fight. A reporter from the *Globe* called on Cantlie for a story and the doctor gave him the facts and also spoke of his visits to *The Times*.

That was the turning point. Other newspapers became interested in the prisoner in the Legation and soon reporters were swarming outside the house in Portland Place. They demanded to see the prisoner. Secretary Tang came out of his private office to talk to the reporters. Polite, smiling, utterly urbane, he assured the gentlemen that the story was a gigantic hoax put across by some joker with a wild imagination.

The reporters warned Tang that if the prisoner were not released within a day citizens might storm the Legation and free the hostage.

Tang went on smiling his subtle Chinese smile, seeming to imply that the journalists were surely joking, although he understood their flair for humour. It was apparent, though, that he failed to gauge the temper of the people of London, or the influence of the national Press.

Finally newspapermen tracked down Sir Halliday Macartney to Midland House. It was the *Daily Mail* which pulled off the scoop and printed the first interview with the legal representative of the Chinese Legation.

INTERVIEWS WITH SIR HALLIDAY MACARTNEY

Sir Halliday Macartney, Counsellor of the Chinese Legation, visited the Foreign Office at 3.30 yesterday afternoon. In conversation with a Press representative Sir Halliday said: "I am unable to give you any information beyond what has already appeared in print." On being informed that the Foreign Office had just issued an announcement to the effect that Lord Salisbury had requested the Chinese Minister to release the prisoner, Sir Halliday admitted that this was so, and in answer to a further question as to what would be the result of

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the request, replied, "The man will be released, but this will be done strictly without prejudice to the rights of the Legation involved."

In the course of a later conversation with a representative of the Press, Sir Halliday Macartney said: "Sun Wen is not the name of the man whom we have in detention upstairs. We have no doubt of his real identity and have been all the time fully informed of all his movements since he set foot in England. He came of his own free will to the Legation, and was certainly not kidnapped or forced or inveigled into the premises. It is quite a usual thing for a solitary Chinaman in London to call here to make casual inquiries or to have a chat with a countryman. There appears, moreover, to be some ground for suspecting that this peculiar visitor, believing himself unknown, came with some idea of spying on us and getting some information. Nobody knew him by sight. When he called he got into conversation with one of our staff and was afterwards introduced to me. We chatted for a while and some remarks he made led me after he had gone to suspect he might be the person we were having watched. These suspicions being confirmed, he was on returning the following day detained, and he is still under detention pending instructions from the Chinese Government."

Speaking of the international side of the matter, Sir Halliday said: "The man is not a British, but a Chinese subject. We contend that for certain purposes the Legation is Chinese territory where the Chinese Minister alone has jurisdiction. If a Chinaman comes here voluntarily and if there are charges or suspicions against him, we contend that no one outside has any right to interfere with his detention. It would be quite different if he were outside this building, for then he would be on British territory, and we could not arrest him without a warrant."

Answering further questions, Sir Halliday mentioned that the man was not treated like a prisoner, and every consideration had been paid to his comfort. Sir Halliday ridiculed the statement which had appeared that the captive might be subjected

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to torture or undue pressure. He added a statement that a letter of inquiry had been received from the Foreign Office on the subject, which would receive immediate attention.

The Central News says Sir Halliday Macartney, on his return to the Chinese Legation from the Foreign Office, proceeded to the bedside of the Minister Kung Ta Jen, and explained to him that Lord Salisbury had insisted upon the release of Sun Wen.

British newspapers came out with a rash of editorials, waxing indignant at the uncivilized breach of international law by the Imperial Chinese Government. Scotland Yard posted guards outside the Legation. The harbour authorities, too, were alerted. By October 23rd the incident was having repercussions at the highest level; Lord Salisbury, Britain's Foreign Minister, issued a note of protest to the Chinese Minister demanding the immediate release of the prisoner. Two hours later, the Legation guards came to "Sun Wen" and told him to put on his shoes, coat and hat and to follow them downstairs. Was this the last act of his kidnapping? Were the Chinese ready to ship him out? Or was he going to be transferred to a cellar, where he could more conveniently be shot?

"Where are we going?" he asked his impassive Chinese guards, and received no answer.

The prisoner was led downstairs into a small reception room. Three men were waiting for him, and lo and behold! One of them was a friend. He had never welcomed the sight of a man's face as he did the friendly visage of Dr. Cantlie. Accompanying the doctor was Inspector Jarvis of Scotland Yard, and a clerk from the Foreign Office. Neither Tang nor Macartney were in the room, nor any member of the Legation staff.

The doors were open; the four men walked out of the Legation, where a huge crowd was massed to greet the prisoner. Newspaper men from all parts were there to give him a hero's welcome. The young man who had landed on England's shore so

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unobtrusively three weeks ago was now bombarded with hundreds of questions. The chief question everyone asked him was: How had he managed to communicate with the doctor? But this was one question the ex-prisoner would not answer. He had an obligation to the quiet, colourless servant who had saved his life.

After a visit to Scotland Yard and a happy dinner at the Cantlie home, the freed 'man wrote a letter of gratitude to every London newspaper. No editor could know that this letter was written by the man who was later to become the first President of the Republic of China and founder of China's native democracy even though his friends had helped him to compose it.

The text of the letter has made history:

"Will you kindly express through your columns my keen appreciation of the action of the British Government in effecting my release from the Chinese Legation? I have also to thank the Press generally for their timely help and sympathy. If anything were needed to convince me of the generous public spirit which pervades Great Britain and the love of justice which distinguishes its people, the recent acts of the last few days have conclusively done so.

Knowing and feeling more keenly than ever what a constitutional Government and enlightened people mean, I am prompted still more actively to pursue the cause of advancement, education and civilization in my own well-beloved but oppressed country.

Yours faithfully

Sun Yat Sen."*

* Sun Yat Sen became China's great Socialist leader dedicated to overthrowing the Manchu régime and establishing a republic. He was the son of a poor Chinese farmer and as a student became associated with a secret revolutionary society. The failure of a plot led to the execution of several of the conspirators, but Sun Yat Sen escaped. At one time a reward of £100,000 for his capture was offered, but in 1912, on the onset of revolution, he became provisional President of the new republic. He died in 1921.

Manila Boy

the Philippines as the Communist-led guerillas had done in China, North Korea, and were trying to do in Indo-China and Malaya.

He was so heroic, well-trained, and gallant in underground warfare that Taruc appointed him to assassinate Ramon Magsaysay, the Defence Minister (now President) of the Philippine Republic, the man who had started the war of extermination against the Communist underground. The Huks had planned the overthrow of the Philippine Government, and the Politbureau of the Philippine Communist Party had secretly pronounced Magsaysay's death sentence.

Manila Boy was finally ready for his mission. For this he dressed as a peasant boy and in his wide clothes concealed grenades and pistol and ammunition. He walked for days to reach Manila and inquired carefully about the location of Government buildings and the Defence Minister's office. A few blocks from the Defence Ministry he ran into some peasants discussing politics and stopped to listen. They were praising Magsaysay as a real friend of the people; they said he would shoot any soldier who harmed the peasants. Manila Boy knew better. He had seen police cruelty against peasants. He had seen peasants driven off their land.

He could no longer keep quiet. He interrupted the group and told them his side of the story. He refused to believe "these lies"; he knew what he had seen. In the midst of this heated argument an ex-Huk recognized him. They both had been at the same camp fire, in the same rice fields. He took Tomas aside and said: "Why don't you speak to Magsaysay himself? I will help you see him. You can hear the truth for yourself."

Manila Boy agreed. He would see Magsaysay and carry out his Party's order. The assassination would be much easier than he had anticipated.

Next morning the ex-Huk and Manila Boy visited Magsaysay. No one searched them when they entered the Government building. In the Minister's room, Manila Boy kept his hand on

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the gun in his pocket; in his clothes were also the two hand grenades.

For an hour Magsaysay and Tomas argued. Magsaysay told him of the sufferings of the Filipinos; he told him what Manila Boy already knew. But why did they suffer? Was it not because of the Japanese? The Americans had given them independence and helped to get rid of the Japanese. Then they had left. But the Communists, who were they? Weren't foreigners their real leaders in the Philippines? If they took over power, wouldn't they run the country just as the Japanese had run it? What about Filipinos running the Philippines for themselves? If they all stuck together they could help the poor, bring reforms in education, and increase production. "I don't care who runs the Philippines," Magsaysay said, "but they must be people born here and not people organized by Moscow under directions of the Cominform." He told Manila Boy he too could help.

Manila Boy grew silent. It was true that there were couriers and men from abroad who had been at the local Politbureau meetings and in the high command. These foreigners always brought word about new arms and when they would arrive on neutral ships. They had given a course in handling T.N.T. for sabotage purposes. These foreigners seemed to be in authority. He knew Magsaysay was telling the truth.

"They are not your brothers," said Magsaysay. "We are your brother Filipinos."

Manila Boy was faced with a great decision—should he admit he had been wrong, or should he carry out his mission to kill the Government minister?

Manila Boy, who had grown up as a Catholic, said later that in this moment he thought first of his mother, then of his childhood days of starvation, of prayers which were not answered—and was ready to draw the pistol and shoot this enemy of world Communism. But, in a flash, Manila Boy put his pistol on the table, took out the two hand grenades, and said:

"I came here to kill you, but if you want to bring unity to the

Manila Boy

Philippines and get rid of the Soviet underground, let me help you."

Magsaysay did not move. He neither trembled nor showed any emotion when Manila Boy threw the weapons on the table.

In the Republic of the Philippines you cannot come to a Government office to murder a member of the cabinet and then walk out—even after conversion—a free man.

Magsaysay visited Manila Boy in prison. He promised to help him. Manila Boy stood trial. It was a sensational session in which he told of the Soviet-sponsored underground, of arms the Huks received with the aid of Communist maritime unions, of arms concealed in food boxes. He also told of the secret drills and the Party schooling. He gave the names of the two Russian agents who followed the Huks as instructors and the Communist Chinese who advised the Huk high command. It was startling testimony. Manila Boy was sentenced, but paroled to Magsaysay.

Working now under the direction of Magsaysay, Manila Boy's job was to convert other members of the Huks. He succeeded at great danger to himself in persuading a dozen key men to come over. Some of these returned to civilian life, and others began to work as intelligence agents for the Philippine Army.

The new converts and Magsaysay's constructive campaign to aid the farmers brought five thousand Huk soldiers into the fold of Philippine democracy in one year. Manila Boy supervised much of the movement under the Magsaysay command.

In 1950, the Huks had twenty thousand men under arms and a reserve of two million Filipinos. In some areas, such as Luzon, they controlled quite a few towns; they confiscated buildings and collected taxes for the Red Army. Like the Chinese Communists during the civil war, they ruled by terror, threat and fire.

In every city they took over, they killed at least one Government official, hanged him from a tree or pole, and labelled the dead body with the inscription: "*He opposed the Huks. Red Front.*"

To terrorize the population further, the assassination squad

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arrested many Catholic priests. A priest was tied down. A rope was put on each leg and each rope was fastened to an ox. Then the oxen were driven in different directions, splitting the man of God. The Huks laughed at these reprisals against the Church which opposed Communism.

Manila Boy knew all of this. He knew also of the secret plan to start an uprising of the Philippines in the spring of 1952. Russian arms were scheduled to arrive via Burma and China on Polish ships.

The Huks, who knew of Manila Boy's activities, were aware he had given away their plans. They decided now to kill him and Magsaysay.

José Rizal, whose grandfather was one of the great heroes in Philippine history, was chosen to arrange the second assassination attempt. José was to make an appointment with Magsaysay and Manila Boy for September 1st, 1955. While they were in conference, two Huk assassins were to come in a jeep with a small machine-gun and kill them both.

But Rizal met Magsaysay in his residence instead of the office. He was an ardent Communist, but listened to the two crusaders for Philippine freedom. He broke down, confessed, and warned Magsaysay and his underground fighter, saving their lives. He became one of them.

Rizal and Manila Boy were converted by the Defence Minister, but they in turn "educated" him. They convinced Magsaysay that government by landlords should be abolished; and that a people's government founded on democracy and the elimination of Communist dictatorship should be set up. They advocated an end to all remnants of feudalism.

The first problem was to overcome the Huk high command—the leaders of the Communist rebel armies.

Manila Boy and Rizal finally worked it out.

Manila Boy knew the woman who regularly brought special rations to the Communist commanders. She was an old woman who carried the food packages—scarce meat, bread and fats—in

Manila Boy

her basket. Manila Boy and Rizal suggested that agents follow the old woman and so learn the names and locations of the entire high command.

Within a week, the entire Politbureau was arrested. The greatest shock to Magsaysay was that one of the arrested Politbureau members, a new leader probably not known to Manila Boy and Rizal, was Professor José Lava from the University of the Philippines, a mild-mannered, kind man with whom the Defence Minister lunched once a week. Yet this man had worked with the group which had tried twice to assassinate him.

The raid was a success. The Military Intelligence Office found not only the men of the high command but also weapons, documents and codes which revealed contacts all over the Pacific. The Politbureau stood trial and each member was sentenced either to death or to life imprisonment.

The war against the Communist underground also unearthed the fact that the Communists taught at mobile Marxist "universities." The teachers were, for the most part, foreigners—Russians and Chinese. One American traitor was discovered among them. He was William J. Pomeroy of Rochester, New York. He had fought against the Japanese in the Pacific, remained at the end of the war in the Philippines and married a Filipino. Pomeroy became the authority on dialectic materialism and his job was to train Filipino leaders in Marxist theory. His arrest later did much to weaken Communist strength.

Manila Boy and Rizal visited all the Communists who had been arrested. They made many more converts and also learned the names of other members and leaders who had escaped. What was left of the leadership of the organization? Taruc was now arrested. The Philippines' own La Passionaria, Andrea de los Reyes, was captured in combat. In her prison cell she admitted that her father had been killed by the police and as long as she lived she would fight the Government and work for Communism. Such fanatics were sentenced to life imprisonment. The Government knew that if the Philippines were ever to have internal peace,

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these fanatics should never be given a second chance to destroy the country.

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Manila Boy's next job was, perhaps, the most unusual any ex-Communist spy has ever undertaken.

The crusade against the Huks had produced thousands of parentless children. Women fleeing the camps of that army left the children behind them, acting on the Communist law that the Party comes first and the family second.

Manila Boy organized welfare work among these children in the hope that the parents sooner or later would show up and claim the children if they knew where they were. Perhaps the parents would tell more secrets of the Huk underground army in order to get their children back. Only one out of ten actually showed up to claim their children, however. Still these were excellent links for further information on the Red jungle fighters hiding in the wilderness.

These tactics brought out information that made it possible to plant one of Manila Boy's friends in the new Politbureau of the Communist Party in the Philippines. This man was present a few weeks later when the new leaders held a picnic, at which they planned new action to liberate their imprisoned comrades. Manila Boy's spy got word to the Government and, in the midst of the picnic, the Philippine army arrived. The underground leaders resisted and all twenty-six men were killed.

This important action wiped out most of the remaining Huk leaders.

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Now Manila Boy began to play an important role in the great constructive measures needed. Still dressed as a peasant boy, he helped Rizal shape the new Government policies. Ramon Magsaysay and General Duque legalized the reforms.

The Filipino Army suddenly became a new army. Young

Manila Boy

idealistic officers became the friends of the poor peasants. The army furnished them help at court and, in many cases, ended the tenant-farmer relationship by pressing for land grants to the peasants.

The remaining Huks, now desperate, killed Filipino soldiers on sight, and massacred small units in the villages. As they lost their hold on the people, they became more dangerous, vicious and barbarous.

Each ex-Huk who left the Communists was offered Government pardon. And more than that, he was promised land grants, a job on a farm, or help in business. Many of them who are still in prison are getting vocational training and a job is promised them on their release. Thousands came and talked and confessed. More parents came to claim their children, and families were reunited.

Rent ceilings were legalized; illiterate peasants were not permitted to pay more than 30 per cent of their crop income for rent, and the Government promised to defend them in court if an attempt was made to impose on them.

Magsaysay has become the Messiah of the poor Filipinos, but he is humble enough to say that all he did for his country he did only with the help of those men around him. The ex-Huks worship him.

Where the Huks were strongest, in the Pampanga Province, 2 per cent of the people owned 98 per cent of the land. It is here the reforms are operating. They might never have come at all if Manila Boy and José Rizal had murdered Ramon Magsaysay. They became a team and they are proud of what they have done. Those who have heard Manila Boy speak know his favourite slogan: "*The Filipinos will never be Russian.*"

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Magsaysay in seeking the presidency of the Republic received the support of Ambassador Carlos Romulo, United Nations delegate. Because Magsaysay has become one of Asia's great

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leaders, he was asked; "Can the Philippines help the rest of South-east Asia against Communism?" He humbly answered:

"Of course we can. We have won the military war against our Communists. They are not now a threat to our security. When a democracy works, Huks or any internal Communist army cannot be successful.

"We can also show Asians that this business of being an ally of democratic countries is something far different from the colonialism they knew. Let them come here and look at our standard of living, our freedom, and compare them with anything else."

XVII

The Unforsaken

[BY L. CARMI, AS TOLD TO THE AUTHOR]

Y enemies called me a spy, but to my friends and those who understood our cause I was a patriot—a young man who loved his country and was willing to serve her. Whatever the truth was, I held the rank of intelligence officer in an army in which nobody wore a uniform. Neither was our struggle for survival acknowledged for we were condemned as terrorists by those in authority who denied us our destiny. I belonged to Haganah, the Jewish organisation dedicated to opening the country to those of our co-religionists whose only hope lay in being admitted to the land of their fathers from the ghettos and concentration camps of Europe.

Following Germany's defeat in 1915 the Jews of Palestine had clashed with the Arabs and British on this bitterly disputed issue which was being decided on the very soil where the Maccabees had destroyed their enemies, where Gideon had survived, and David had emerged victorious over Goliath. Now Jerusalem, the eternal mistress of all cities, was once more embattled and brave men and women fought as irregulars, aided by secret service units and espionage operators.

Vividly I can recall the dark night of October 9, 1919. I lay flat on the ground facing the British prison camp of Atlit, which was about ten miles away from the beautiful harbour of Haifa and its historic hills, and not far from Nazareth. As I felt the soft wind which blew inland from the spangled Mediterranean I thought of the two hundred men, women and children detained within the camp I lay watching. All of them had by some miracle survived Hitler's gas chambers and had left Germany on a few

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tramp ships so that they might start life anew free of the old agonies and terror. They possessed neither visas nor permission to land and the British Navy had intervened and brought them ashore as prisoners. Outward bound from Europe's dark shores they had imagined that the long and murderous nightmare was over, but in sight of the Promised Land they had been captured and bundled ashore and so had merely exchanged one prison for another. From being outlawed as human beings they had now become illegal immigrants with no right of entry to their ancient homeland.

But we of the Hagannah were determined to throw this cargo of human wreckage a lifeline to freedom. They had had enough of misery and cruelty and on this starlit night three units of our organisation, among whom were even a few young girl soldiers, lay outside the Athlit camp waiting for the signal to go in. As commander of this small task force I knew it was not altogether a blind venture. Far from it. Some of the prisoners awaited us and we had been able to smuggle a few weapons to them in preparation for the moment of liberation. None of us, though, wanted bloodshed. The world was already sodden with it, and we had no desire to spill that of British soldiers with whom, not long ago, we had fought side by side against Rommel and his North Africa *korps*.

For many days I had kept a close watch on Camp Athlit so that I knew exactly what was the routine, the strength of the prison guards and the number of soldiers within. And in that time I had met and talked with one of them—a young Socialist with a sense of British fairplay who had been outraged by Bevin's brutal stupidity. The Labourite's Foreign Secretary was busy tearing down the friendship which Palestine Jewry felt for Britain and this young soldier knew it.

"It's come to something when we Britishers have to stand guard over the helpless victims of Nazism," he said.

Anyhow, as a result of my talks with him he agreed to help us free the prisoners and we were awaiting his signal—the gleam

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from a couple of lighted cigarettes at the barbed wire fence facing us. As the time drew near I could feel my heart begin to pound and wondered what were the feelings of the others. Most of them were new to the game, not more than between eighteen and twenty years old. I had fought in the desert and, at twenty-seven, was seasoned to warfare and now I felt I was up against the wrong people. I had experienced this feeling when I had undertaken to spy against the British, but I consoled myself with the thought that they didn't belong to Palestine as I did. They were trying to uphold a policy that had no moral justification—I was prepared to risk my life as a spy or a soldier so that the dispossessed might find a refuge in the land to which they had an inalienable right.

Gradually calmness oozed away and I began to believe that something must have gone wrong. I had no fear that my British friend would let us down, but Camp Athlit was not an isolated outpost somewhere in the desert. The British were wide awake and the refugee camp was linked with three nearby military camps which were all heavily guarded. Two hundred yards from me was the first of the fortified police posts. I was well aware that the strongest buildings anywhere in Palestine were the solid brick buildings of the army and well-equipped police guards. *

In spying on these locations I had come to learn the strength of each post, and I knew that vigilance diminished after midnight. We had mapped the entire area of Athlit and were even familiar with the names of the men likely to be on duty. Each of the three platoons had been briefed as to what was expected of them. The first would open the way for the others who would tackle the guards and leave platoon three to supervise the collection of the refugees who were to be put on trucks and dispersed as quickly as possible among the various Jewish agricultural settlements.

It was a good plan, theoretically, but theory didn't always work out and in the event of a mishap I was anxious to avoid violence. I didn't want any of the British soldiers hurt. They were wonderful fighters and fine men and it wasn't their fault that they

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had to become prison guards over people whose only offence was that they needed homes for themselves and their children.

I had been trained by the British in both counter-espionage and guerilla warfare. They were my companions in commando raids in the Arctic and in the heat of Africa. From these experiences I had learned how invaluable it was in an enterprise of this kind to leave a few "extras" behind once the mission was completed. Their job was to hold up any pursuit and, if necessary, to spread a little confusion. I had seen to this part of the business but had made it understood that there was to be no killing if this could be avoided.

As I went over all this ground I had so carefully prepared I began to feel that I could not much longer bear the inactivity. The British camp was silent—it could have been a cemetery for all the movement there was. But at last I saw what we had all long waited for—the glowing points from the cigarettes at the barbed wire. It seemed as if I could almost touch them. Now everything seemed simple and straightforward and my anxiety disappeared like a wisp of smoke in the cold night air.

We operated silently and with not a semblance of a fumble. The barbed wire was severed at the point my British friend had advised. The guards were taken by surprise and had no chance to resist and not even a blow was struck. Within a few moments a truck was waiting for the first of the refugees—the old and the sick. Nothing seemed to go amiss, even in the camp itself, in those critical first few minutes. Arms were handed to those capable of defending themselves should the need arise; a doctor among the refugees was at his post, just as we had planned, and there was a Hebrew scholar, a teacher of the young, collecting helpers to act as leaders. The lights which flooded the fences during the night were dimmed and in the meantime we had rounded up the rest of the guards who were off duty and asleep in a large dormitory.

All this happened quietly and with the ease of an exercise on paper and soon every Jewish prisoner had been roused and told to prepare to leave. The old people and children needed help and

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reassurance. One old man over ninety was so bewildered that he just stood gazing around him helplessly unable to realise what was happening. He was dressed and led out to the truck without knowing that he was being freed. The children, several of them only a few months old, stared with wondering eyes at the men of the Haganah armed with hand grenades and rifles. We had brought a drop of wine along to soothe them and it kept them from crying.

We were anxious to get the trucks moving and realised we might run into trouble on the road from British troop convoys or the police. Somehow we got them into the trucks, the old and the sick, the children, and the men and the women. They had come from the strangest places and some of them spoke languages we could not understand. They were ill-clad and shivered from the cold night air and from fear. I am certain there were those among them who, rather than face another crisis in their lives, would have preferred to have remained within the camp, for at least their British guards had not treated them brutally or forced them to go short of food. We had bound all the prison guards and now the time had come to go, but two Rabbis prayed for the safety of their people and we waited until they had asked

Lord that their homeless flock might find peace and safety. They were the last to leave.

As we drove away I found myself sitting next to a young man and a girl who took my hand in hers in gratitude. She was young and she kissed my cheek, knowing that if Haganah could prevent it she would not be sent back to Germany which was what the British intended. She had dark deeply-set eyes and her hair was brushed back neatly from her brows. With the moonlight on her face I saw how beautiful she was and before the alarm of escape was sounded she told me she had studied the piano and had hoped to become a concert pianist. Nazi storm-troopers killed her parents and at eighteen she found herself in a concentration camp. Her name was Liah and I shall never forget how she looked that night—a young face that reflected the sorrow of mankind and yet, withal, was not without hope and courage.

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Ten minutes out from Athlit we were being chased by police cars, but the extra men we had planted to deal with this very possibility put a crimp in the pursuit by using road blocks and capturing the crews. There was no gunplay and the pursuers were allowed their freedom, but they had to walk back to camp. They were no longer a threat to the refugees.

Next morning there was plenty of activity on the part of the British. The police and military searched every agricultural settlement over a great radius without discovering a single prisoner. They had been taken under the wing of protectors and gifts were awaiting them, boots and clothing and even chocolates for the children. At a certain kibbutz I saw Liah and went over to her and said, "Shalom," and the word peace, I could see, was music to her.

She smiled and said, "Do you realise that you are the only Israeli I know here?"

"You will know many of us before you have been here very long."

That evening after the workers had come in from the fields and orchards and dinner had been served to us, Liah sat down at the piano and played to us the music of Rachmaninoff and Grieg. As I listened to her I realised how very little it took to make life rich and satisfying. It was the spirit that counted—it transcended wealth and ambition. There were prayers for the deliverance which had come about and I offered my thanks for having been able to help these poor people and that in doing so no mother of a son had lost his life through me.

There is a postscript to this story which I almost forgot. On to I was able to show Liah the country in which she had found freedom. Jerusalem, Nazareth, the Negev and the old hills that belong to time. In Germany she had looked only on death but here was the bright life of people who had walked out of its shadow. She said it was like hearing a wondrous melody and so it was. That year we were married.